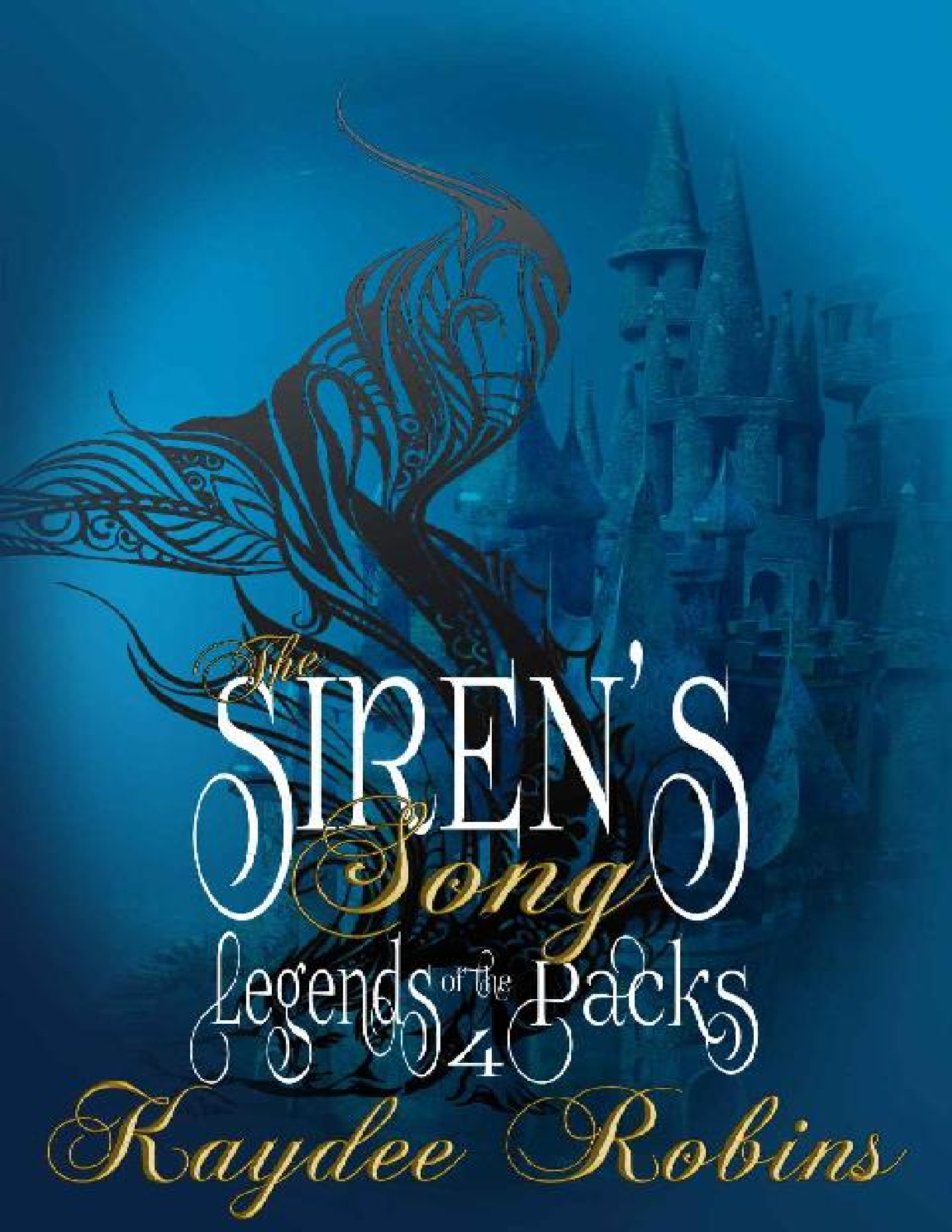

The
Siren's
Song
Legends of the Packs
3
Raydee Robins

The
SIREN'S
Song

The Siren’s Song

Copyright © 2022 Kaydee Robins

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except with brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and specific other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

All names, characters, and references to the real world are written in a fictitious manner. Any use of trademarks has not been authorized and is used strictly for fictitious purposes and is not associated with the owners of the trademarks.

Contact Info: Kaydee@KaydeeRobins.com

ASIN: B09PJ2HCF2 – eBook
ISBN: 9798449175328 – Paperback

First Edition: May 2022
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

The Siren's Song

Legends of the Packs 4

Kaydee Robins

Copyright © 2021 Kaydee Robins

Dedication

Before I met you, I had no purpose, I was just the restless prince, always causing problems. With you by my side I've finally found what I've been looking for all these years. Thank you for making me whole again.

– Erik

Contents

Chapter 1
Chapter 2
Chapter 3
Chapter 4
Chapter 5
Chapter 6
Chapter 7
Chapter 8
Chapter 9
Chapter 10
Chapter 11
Chapter 12
Chapter 13
Chapter 14
Chapter 15
Chapter 16
Chapter 17
Chapter 18
Chapter 19
Chapter 20
Chapter 21
Chapter 22
Chapter 23
Epilogue
Thank You
Stay in Contact
Books by Kaydee Robins
Snow White
About the Author

Dictionary

Legends of the Packs and *Wayward Warriors* features characters from around the world. To improve the cadence of the novels, all dialect has been written in US English. However, phrases in the characters native tongue can be found peppered throughout the narrative. Below is a running list of said phrases. Some expressions are author ingenuity based on research of the language and may not be historically accurate.

Please note if the bullet points below overlap the text please reduce your text size on your app/reader. This only affects the dictionary, the narrative will be displayed correctly regardless of your text size choice. This is a limitation of current coding that I cannot control. Thanks! - Kaydee

Arabic

- *Alqarf* – Shit

French

- *Excusez-moi* – Excuse me
- *Nique ta mère* – Motherfucker
- *Merde* – Fuck
- *Ma chérie* – My darling/sweetheart
- *Maman* – Mom (Informal)
- *Fille* – Daughter/Girl
- *Monsieur* – Sir
- *Mon bébé* – My baby
- *Père* – Papa

German

- *Scheiße* – Fuck

Irish

- *A chara* – My friend
- *A mhuirnín* – Darling
- *A rúnsearc* – Beloved
- *Beagán iasc* – Little fish
- *Ceann beag* – Little one
- *Dadaí* – Daddy (pronounced the same as we say “daddy”)
- *Danu* – The Mother Goddess – Most shifters of Celtic descent are devout to her.
- *Dia dhuit* – Hello
- *Mo shíorghrá* – My eternal love

Irish English

- *Do a bunk* – Sneak off
- *Donkey’s years* – A very long time
- *Gaff* – House
- *Shut yer bake* – Shut up
- *The jacks* – Toilet
- *Rashers* – Bacon

Latin

- *Ego* Current Alpha *ut Alpha de Longfur sarcinis hoc nomine* New Alpha *successori meo et ei potestatem relinquo* – I, *Current Alpha*, Alpha of the Longfur pack hereby name *New Alpha* as my successor and relinquish control to them.
- *Ego*, New Alpha, *titulum accipio Alpha de* Pack Name *et spondeo populum custodire usque ad halitum morientem* – I, *New Alpha*, accept the title of Alpha of the *Pack Name* and promise to protect the people until my dying breath.

Old Norse

- *Ek bind minn sál til ykkarr ok klaim þú sem minn bóndi* – I bind my soul to yours and claim you as my husband.
- *Dǫglingr* – Prince
- *Dróttning* – Queen
- *Faðir* – Father
- *Föðurkyn* – Father's kin – Pibling
- *Fólkhagi* – Princex
- *Fylkir* - King
- *Hnefatafl* – A *tafl* game that is often referred to as Viking Chess in today's world
- *Kærr* – Beloved
- *Með níurinn* – by the Nine – the Nine are the nine daughters of Rán and Ægir, the Goddess and God of the sea. Think of it as someone saying sweet baby Jesus or oh my God.
- *Móðir* – Mother
- *Rán* – Goddess of the Sea, main deity of sirens
- *Sæti* – Sweetie, Cutie
- *Streð mik* – Fuck me
- *Tafl* – A board used for multiple pub/board games by Vikings

Portuguese

- *Jaci* – Moon Goddess - Tupi-Guarani Mythology

Russian

- *Lapa* – Paw/Sweetie Pie
- *Blyad'* – Fuck

Shifter Slang

- *Virago* – derogatory term for female alpha – humans use the word to describe masculine women.

Chapter 1

“You did what?!” Fylkir Matheis Søkonge bellowed from his obscenely large stone throne. Erik had not seen him this mad in quite some time.

He and his sibling, Dare, had gotten into their fair share of trouble over the years, but he’d never seen his father this mad because of it. If smoke could occur in water, it would be coming out of his father’s ears.

Erik’s alpha brother, Maisesis, stood behind their father’s dais with a smirk on his face. He was the one who ratted them out, ‘for their own good,’ he said. Maise was a spitting image of their father, Adonis-worthy, onyx-black hair, with a blue-green tail. Whereas Erik and Dare took after their mother.

His mother sat next to his father in a throne only slightly smaller. She was petite, slim, her hair snow-white and grayed with age. Her tail, bluish-purple just like theirs. Her breasts were covered in matching scales.

The throne room was massive, crafted of stones from the dry lands. Windows lined the walls to the left and the right. Actual glass sat in them, securing the palace. Such technologies, though, had been lost to time; the castle was only maintained with siren Songs now. Green and red algae dotted both seats in random places and crawled up the walls. Seagrass was shaped into lanterns around the room. Inside each a school of lanternfish supplied lighting.

Sirens didn’t need the light per se, but it was enjoyable none the less.

Their father’s Alpha Power flooded the throne room making Erik wince. Next to him, his sibling whimpered. Erik reached for their hand and squeezed it, letting them know they weren’t alone. Where Erik was rambunctious, impulsive, and bold, Dare was demure, calming, and sweet. They were the embodiment of mirror-image twins, opposite in every way. However, they stuck together like glue. They still shared their rooms even at almost two-hundred and fifty years.

Dare hid slightly behind Erik, their father waiting for one of them to talk.

“Well?” their father asked again.

“Maise already told you. Why do you need me to tell you again?” he stated as if it was every day he was in this position. Well, technically it was only a few times a week. What? He had to have some fun.

“I want you to tell me what you were thinking,” the king replied exasperated.

“Dare and I were exploring. A ship was passing overhead. From the way it was rocking back and forth we could tell the waters at the surface were rough. The ship capsized and we rescued the people aboard.”

Fylkir Matheis huffed, “I can’t believe you two. Out of all the shit you’ve put me through, this one takes the cake. You exposed yourself to land walkers!”

“They were going to die. We couldn’t sit by and do nothing,” Erik tried.

“You shouldn’t even have been out there to see it. If *Rán* wanted to claim them as hers, it was not your right to interfere.”

“Why not? *Rán* doesn’t ask for us to make sacrifices. If any of them were mers you’d rescue them no questions asked,” Erik retorted.

“Merpeople wouldn’t have needed rescuing from a capsized ship to begin with,” his father growled.

Just leave it and take our punishment, Dare pleaded in his head. Their twin connection gave them the unique ability to communicate telepathically. It was an exceedingly rare ability. They were the only twins currently alive who had it. It probably helped that they were descendants of *Rán* but that wasn’t a requirement.

“I am done allowing your mother to baby you two. Both of you should have been mated off over two-hundred years ago, but I allowed you to frolic around. No more,” he demanded. “Both of you will be mated in the next thirty days or you will suffer the consequences.”

“Matheis!” *Dróttning* Asteothelia cried.

“Don’t try me, woman,” he said holding his hand up. Their parents were fated mates, so the king usually gave in to whatever she wanted. “I’ve given into your requests every time and still they don’t learn. Thirty days to find a mate is my compromise. They won’t be so troublesome if they have their own children to take care of.”

Thelia sighed and nodded. She would support her mate even if she didn’t agree with it. Once the pair were in private quarters, she would probably argue with him but never in public.

“Maisesis please escort your brothers to their rooms. They are to be escorted everywhere. Make sure the secret passageway from their room is also guarded.”

“Dad,” Erik whined, he wasn’t a kid. He didn’t need an escort.

The king ignored him though, letting his brother lead the twins away.

Maise guided them down the hallway to their rooms. Sea grass and colorful coral reefs covered the sea floor. The lanternfish swam happily in their little lantern enclosures every ten feet or so, protected from the predators that would eat them.

“You know, if you’d just stay inside the city dad wouldn’t keep getting mad at you,” Maise said after a minute of silence.

You know, if you removed the stick up your ass, you’d feel better, Dare said sarcastically in Erik’s head.

Erik giggled at his sibling’s antics, causing Dare’s previously serious face to crack. Erik was the only one who got to hear Dare’s snide comments. Dare was too timid to say them out loud.

If he did that, he wouldn’t have any personality at all, he retorted. Dare snickered again.

“Are you two ever going to grow up? You’re two-hundred and forty-eight for *Rán’s* sake.” Even though Maisesis was their clutchmate, only a few days older than they were, he acted like he was a few hundred years older instead.

Erik stuck his tongue out at his brother, “Dare was just saying you need to pull that stick out of your ass and have a little fun. You could join in the fun sometimes you know.”

Maisesis stopped outside the door to their rooms, “Unlike you, I have responsibilities. I have no time for frivolous things.”

“Rescuing someone is not frivolous,” Erik countered. “We’re all people of the Gods. Why should it matter if the person I rescue has fins or not? Seriously, if I was on land and was about to be hit by one of those automobile things they have, wouldn’t you want one of them to rescue me?”

His brother sighed, “I wasn’t talking about the rescue. Personally I think you did the right thing, *this time*. But like father said, you shouldn’t have been there to rescue them in the first place.”

Maise looked at Dare, “Please, both of you find a mate. Dad’s serious this time. He’s at his wits end and I don’t want to see you locked up like common criminals.”

“We’re not promising anything,” Dare said softly.

“What they said,” Erik added. “We’ve met many of the eligible alphas and betas in the sea. We don’t like any of them.”

His brother pursed his full lips. The man was almost two feet longer than Erik and looked exactly like his father. “Behave,” he said before turning away.

The guards hadn’t wasted any time, they were already stationed at their door to ensure they wouldn’t escape.

Erik pushed the door to their rooms open, the water whooshing around them as they entered. Their rooms were like most of the rest in the underwater castle. Algae lined stone walls. Seagrass on seabed floors and coral reefs were placed about as if they were plants. Stone furniture shaped like couches, chaise lounges, and chairs sat here and there.

Books sat on bookshelves, relics of the times when sirens mingled with man. They were spelled to prevent deterioration. Erik had read through them all. There were a few that he'd rescued from shipwrecks over the years but with them being an unknown language he couldn't exactly read them. Which left him with hardly anything to read.

"I don't want to mate anyone," Dare said as they sat on the couch, their blue-purple fins swishing haphazardly.

Erik grabbed the *tafl* board and pieces from the bookshelf before sitting on the chaise across from Dare. "I don't want to either," he huffed.

He and Dare quietly setup the board to play *hnefatafl*. It was their favorite *tafl* game.

Erik had never seen himself as one to settle down and have his own kids. He played with his nieces and nephews and the other children in the kingdom, more than happy to be the fun uncle and give them back at the end of the day. Dare would make a great parent. And while they were more mellow than Erik, they didn't want to be stifled either.

Chapter 2

This sucks, Dare whined through their mental connection. They were currently on date number twenty. True to his word, their father had set up dates almost every night for the pair.

I know, this guy is boring as hell. I can't even remember his name, and he smells like clams.

Dare's amusement came through their bond. Erik could imagine that they were giggling out loud. *This one's being a total tool. He tried ordering for me.*

Erik snickered out loud. While his sibling was a quiet one, they hated being pushed around. Especially by alphas that thought they could walk over them.

"Do I amuse you?" the man across from Erik asked clearly annoyed.

Erik shook his head, "No. I'm sorry. I just thought of something funny."

The twins kept their mental bond a secret. Even though they were royalty and protected more than most, there were still evil merpeople out there. Their city was huge, probably over a million sirens or more. Even with their long lifespan there was no way to know all of them.

"Oh. As I was saying, I'm the head of the shark training department…"

Erik mentally rolled his eyes, sighing as the man droned on about his duties as a shark trainer. Instead, he picked at his food.

When Erik snickered at Dare's annoyance for a second time, his date pursed his lips. "*Dǫglingr* Jerrick." That was another thing. Not once had this man called him Erik or even dropped the title. His mother's humor was not lost on him when she named them Jerrick and Derrick. Did you know they meant the exact same thing? "I don't think we're going to be a good fit. Clearly, you're not enjoying yourself, and I am looking for someone a bit more settled. Perhaps your sibling would be a better fit for me?"

Erik sighed, since obviously this date was over. He was going to be honest. "I doubt it. Dare is just as 'not-settled,'" he said using finger quotes —he was settled in his own skin, thank-you-very-much—"as I am. They're just quieter than I am. We also don't like potential mates using our official titles. That is very off-putting, let me tell you. Would you like it if I used

your last name or title all the time? Now if you'll excuse me, I think I'm done."

Erik didn't wait for the stick-in-the-mud to respond. He rose from his perch, wiped his face with his napkin, grabbed one more of his crab-legs off his plate, and swished off in a huff. His shadow was on his tail as soon as the door to the restaurant closed, which pissed him off even more than the infuriating man who was probably still sitting at the table with his mouth agape.

Ditch your shadow and meet me at the cove?

YES! His sibling exclaimed. *I gotta ditch this alpha first. Yawn, I'm so bored.*

See you soon.

The pair were extremely good at losing their babysitters. This wasn't the first time, nor would it be the last time they'd have a tail that wasn't attached to their bodies.

The underwater city was filled with buildings and alleyways, though Erik preferred to travel in the free water above where he could swim fast and hinderance free. However, he couldn't lose the stoic guard that way, so he made do with weaving in and out of the crowd.

He also hummed a Song under his breath. The twins' appearance was unique to them, and they stood out like a sore thumb. Both had learned a long time ago the Song to change their appearance. His tail faded to green while his hair turned a murky brown—only descendants of the nine daughters had anything else. Not all sirens could weave magic with their Songs. It was a random trait unless the mer was a descendant of *Rán*.

A few more twists and turns and a few blocks later, his shadow was nowhere to be found. Still, he checked every few blocks as he made his way to the outskirts of the city. Traffic was slower here, so he kept his glamor intact.

With another whispered Song he broke the barrier to the city—a Song unique to him and his sibling. No one else knew it as they crafted it themselves. The shield prevented the average mer from leaving the safety of the city. Only high ranked guards, his father, mother, and older brother knew the Song to exit the city. Their Song though was different from that. Theirs bypassed the alarm system built into the barrier that alerted the king anytime someone passed through.

Erik hummed to himself as he swam away from the city, sticking to the reefs to keep himself hidden. About ten minutes later he sang another Song to confirm he was alone before he ducked into a hidden tunnel that he and his sibling had found when they were kids.

The tunnel turned into three then two then four before his head breached the surface, so even if someone did find the entrance the chance of them finding their cove was slim to none.

He took in a deep breath of air as his body adjusted to the change in environment. His gills sealed as he rose from the water. His fins reshaped into legs. He shivered. His body didn't regulate his temperature in biped form the same way as it did when he was in siren form. It was okay though; he and Dare had collected many things from shipwrecks over the last couple hundred years, so they had plenty of blankets and other knickknacks that were from the human world.

He grabbed one of the fluffier blankets that seemed to dry him better than the thinner ones. They seemed to be smaller than the others as well. After he was dry, he hung that one over a rope they had strung up and grabbed one of the thinner blankets, wrapping it around his shoulders.

Erik laid down in the sandy dirt and closed his eyes. There was nothing better than taking a nap in the fresh air. Maybe because he didn't get to do it often.

"Erik," Dare's voice called, piercing through his dream.

"How long have you been here?" Erik asked.

"Not long, a few minutes maybe. Took me forever to ditch my date. Can you believe he tried to get me into his bed? No thank you," they groaned with a huff.

"Ugh. I hate when they do that. At least mine got annoyed with me and told me so. He did ask about you though." Dare tensed up. "Relax, I told him that you wouldn't be a match either considering you hate formalities just as much as I do."

"Thank *Rán*," they replied.

They laid next to each other, their arms touching at the elbows with their hands behind their head and their feet crossed. Identical mirrors in every way down to the mole above their eye, Erik's was on the right brow while Dare's was on the left.

"Let's not go back," Erik stated.

Dare always gave him hundreds of reasons not to leave the safety of their city whenever Erik brought it up, so he was not expecting Dare's next words.

"Okay."

"Wait. What?" he replied sitting up.

Dare sat up too. "Yeah, I mean, dad's not going to change."

"Mom will miss us," Erik said. It was odd being the reasonable one, although he was just repeating back the arguments that Dare had made over the years.

Dare rolled their eyes, "Mom will understand."

"Yeah."

Chapter 3

Jaxon Shadowpaw couldn't wait for his cousin to get back. He was done with all this Alpha business; council members were way more demanding than his commanders of the SBG—Shadowall Bay Guard, and the SBN—Shadowall Bay Navy. Twenty-five years couldn't go fast enough. That was when his niece would be old enough to take the mantel of Alpha Heir. Until then it was his job.

The last six months had been crazy. First his cousin, Brody, found his mate, had triplets, took over as Alpha, and found out that he had a twin he didn't know about. Then they had to rescue said twin. That was the first time Jax had to play Alpha.

Now his Alpha was visiting Jax's half-cousin-in-law—if that's even a thing—Caleb, in America. With Jax's recent promotion to not only Alpha Heir, but High Commander as well, he had his hands full.

At the moment, he had about a hundred unread emails on top of the reports cluttering his normally pristine desk. He could do with an assistant, but he didn't have time to find someone. He also needed to get laid, but, again, no time for it.

A knock at his door pulled his attention away from the email that he'd been not reading for the past ten minutes.

"Come in."

The door promptly opened. Both of his DCs—Deputy Commanders—appeared. Oisín Waterclaw was an older alpha, probably past retirement age if Jax was being honest. However, he still did his job well and kept the navy in line. He had crinkles around his eyes from age and a stern face that never smiled. His men loved him though, so that's all that mattered to Jaxon.

His other DC was a man by the name of Patrick O'Sabre, he was middle-aged and had a gray sprinkling around his temples. He smiled more than the former. Both men towered over his desk. If Jax had been a weaker man, he might have been slightly terrified by them standing together. As it was, he didn't blink an eye.

"What can I do for you gentleman?"

"A fisherman caught a siren in his net. The person's out cold. They were brought to Hagatha a few minutes ago. There's a second one that's frantic, and we can't understand him."

Jaxon was already heading towards the door. If there was one thing that he knew, it was languages. In college he couldn't get enough of them, studying everything under the sun, from ancient Greek to modern Mandarin. Hopefully the siren spoke a language that Jaxon knew.

It didn't take him long to hear the hysterical siren as he made his way toward Hagatha's infirmary. The sounds echoed down the hallways of the old castle. It was the most melodic voice he'd ever heard, even with the anxious undertones. He didn't recognize the language at first. It sounded similar to Danish, but it wasn't. The accent was also heavy, kind of like what he'd expect a Viking to sound like. It made sense, since sirens were known to have frequented the Norwegian shores before they disappeared.

He rounded the corner and came up short. Standing there yelling at one of the guards was a tiny, naked man. His hair was snow-white, not a light blond, but literally white. It hung almost to his knees. Jax was glad that his pants were loose as this man ticked every one of his buttons. He smelled of honeycomb and the sea, an odd but interesting combination and just perfect to Jaxon's senses.

Jaxon released a bit of Alpha Power, sending calming vibes through the room. The man paused and turned toward the source of the Power.

"Hello," he tried in Old Norse.

The man's eyes grew wide, "hello?" he replied with a slightly different pronunciation, but it was clearly the same word. He didn't seem as frantic as he was before, so Jaxon reigned the Power back in. He didn't use it unless needed.

Jax repeated the word with the correct pronunciation.

"You understand me?" the smaller man asked.

"Yes? Maybe?"

"You're the king?"

Jax laughed. "Goddess no, I'm the Alpha Heir. My name is Jaxon Shadowpaw, or Jax," he held out his hand.

The man started speaking so fast that Jax couldn't understand him again, he could have sworn he said something about the person being treated. As he went on his voice started getting higher again.

"Hang on, slow down," he interrupted. "Please speak slower."

"You caught them in your nets and then took them hostage. You have no right," he said poking Jaxon in the chest.

The alpha unconsciously grabbed ahold of the smaller man's hands, "hold on, *beagán iasc*," the endearment slipping, "I promise we were not meaning to catch a siren in our nets. The fishermen fish for fish. My men brough him here—"

"Them," the young man corrected.

"My apologies. My men brought them here because they were hurt. My healer, Hagatha, is healing them. Then you'll both be able to leave."

The smaller man instantly relaxed and started to sag against Jax before he caught himself. “Okay. I want to see them.”

“Sure, would you like some clothes first?” Jax replied taking the clothes that one of his guards handed him.

The man looked down at himself, “Oh, whoops. I um, I don’t know how to put them on.”

Several of the guards let out a chuckle until Jax side-eyed them. The omega’s cheeks bloomed bright red.

“Come on, I’ll show you. May I ask your name?” Jax requested.

“Oh, yeah, sorry. My name is Jerrick Søkonge but only the king—my dad—calls me that. I go by Erik.”

“So, a prince huh?”

“Unfortunately. *Streð mik*, he’s going to be pissed. Humans aren’t supposed to see us. Oh *Rán*, he’s going to disown us for real, or throw us in a cell and lose the key. Oh, *Rán*, what did I do? This is all my fault.”

“Ssh, *beagán iasc*. Breathe with me.” Erik was having a panic attack. He’d been speaking so fast that Jax only caught bits and pieces of what he was saying. Between his Old Norse being rusty and the accents, he needed Erik to speak slower than he was.

The siren took a deep breath and exhaled.

“Here sit,” Jax stated pulling him into the room across the hallway once the man was breathing normally again. It was—actually, Jaxon didn’t know what the room was used for. Erik sat down dutifully in the nearest chair. Jaxon knelt in front of him. Without any words Jaxon slipped the loose pants over Erik’s petite feet. He could feel Erik’s sea-green eyes boring into his skull as he did.

Against his will his cock hardened. Erik’s skin was as soft as a baby’s butt. He forced himself to look at the man’s face instead of perusing his body. Still, he caught sight of the beautiful, uncut semi that Erik was sporting. Erik’s cheeks were burning red. “You’re beautiful,” Jax whispered.

The omega’s cheeks bloomed even darker, and he ducked his head in shyness. “Thank you,” he stammered.

“Stand up,” Jax said pulling Erik to his feet.

He carefully pulled the man’s pants up and buttoned them. He didn’t have to, but he wanted to. There was something about this man that just drew Jaxon in.

“High Commander?” Hagatha interrupted from the doorway.

“Yes?”

“The young siren is fine, but’s he’s—”

“Them,” Jax corrected without thought. A bright smile lit up Erik’s face. Jax wanted to make him smile like that all the time.

“They’ve got a nasty bump on their head and a broken tail. It’s going to take a week or so to recover,” she finished.

“Very well, thank you.”

“Can I see Dare?” Erik asked.

Jax realized then Hagatha had been speaking in Old Norse with a perfect accent. It was getting easier for him to translate the words in his head to English.

“Yes, my young prince,” the old healer said. Hagatha was over a thousand years old, which was extremely old for a witch and almost unheard of. However, she’d prolonged her life to protect the world as best as she could against her evil sister. Celestina had been the one to kidnap Caspian when he was born.

After they rescue Caspian, Celestina came after the omega and his newborn son, Will. Jax’s uncle William, the previous Alpha, turned himself over to the woman to save Caspian and Will from her clutches.

Hagatha led them across the hall to her infirmary. A spitting image of Erik lay on the bed, asleep. A bandage adorned their white hair. Instead of legs, though, they were still in their siren form. Their tail was beautiful, luminous purple and blue scales shimmered in the light. Hagatha had them lying in a shallow bath to keep them wet. Jax imagined that the scales weren’t made to be in the air for a long period of time.

Dare was just as handsome as their brother; however, Jaxon didn’t feel the same pull towards Dare that he did Erik.

Erik instantly ran to his sibling’s side, almost frantic again. He began whispering in his ancient language. Jax walked to Erik’s side and placed a comforting hand on his shoulder. “*Beagán iasc*, they’ll be okay. They’re in good hands, I promise.”

Surprisingly, the omega looked up at Jax and nodded, “Thank you.” Before Jax could reply he had his arms full of the little man. His arms promptly went around Erik’s body. The omega rested his head on Jax’s chest and sighed.

“Why don’t we get you some food?”

A nod was his only answer.

Jaxon turned to Hagatha, “Let me know as soon as they wake?”

“I will.”

Jaxon carried Erik from the room, the siren clinging to him, but he didn’t mind. Jax realized that Erik had never put a shirt on, but after he thought about it, the man probably didn’t wear anything at all when he was in siren form.

DC O’Sabre was awaiting order when Jax stepped outside the infirmary.

“Commander, can you have the kitchens bring lunch for us to my rooms?”

“Yes sir,” Patrick replied and left for the kitchens at once. He could have passed it off to one of the guards but that’s not how his DC worked.

“What are you all still doing standing around here? Back to work,” Jax said to the guards still milling about. Honestly, they should have dispersed after he arrived and took charge of the situation. He supposed he couldn’t be mad about them being a bunch of looky-loos. But Erik and his sibling were people, not museum pieces.

Jax should have probably taken Erik to a guest suite, but he wanted the man in his space. So, he headed off towards his rooms without another thought. By the time he’d arrived, the omega was snoring quietly in his arms. He gently laid the man down in his bed and covered him up.

He should really leave the man alone, but he couldn’t. So, Jaxon did the only other thing there was to do. He crawled into bed next to the siren. His fingers found the man’s hair, carding them through the soft strands.

Chapter 4

A mouthwatering smell broke through Erik's senses, waking him. Scenting was vastly different underwater. Sirens could smell if they practiced, but it wasn't automatic like it was in human form, since they had to literally form air bubbles in the water so they could inhale through their noses so even the slightest scent seemed strong to Erik.

He inhaled deeply again, the scent of ash and elderberry that had calmed him so much he fell asleep in the first place filled his nostrils. As he inhaled Erik realized that his face was nestled against the scent. His cheeks burned as he realized he was still very much in the sexy alpha god's personal space.

"Sleep well?" the rumbly voice attached to the smell asked.

Jaxon Shadowpaw was hotter than hot. Erik's senses told him that he was some type of shifter. However, since he hadn't been out of the sea, he wasn't sure what type. He felt almost like a newborn babe exploring the world for the first time.

Erik looked up at the man holding him still. His chest was just as broad as it had been before, but it was now bare, creamy white skin with a carpet of strawberry blonde hair. Jax's sharp blue eyes locked with his. The irises swirled in an odd pattern with hints of green.

"Yes, thank you," he replied sitting up. Beneath him was the softest of beds. Satin sheets were rumpled around them. "How long have I been asleep?"

"A few hours, *beagán iasc*."

Jax had called him that a few times. He didn't recognize the words and the cadence was different than the language he spoke. The alpha also said the words much more clearly and sure of himself, while he stumbled over Erik's language like he'd never heard it spoken aloud before.

"What's that mean?"

Jaxon blushed, "it means little fish, it's—"

"I am not a little fish," he complained. He should climb out of the bed, find Dare, and leave. Anyone calling a siren a fish he had no business with. But Jaxon looked horrified.

"I'm so sorry," the alpha replied immediately, his voice filled with regret. The man reached for him. Erik went willingly into his arms. "I

promise I meant to offense. Your culture uses terms of endearment for the people close to you, yes?”

Erik settled again Jaxon’s chest again and nodded. Erik thought he saw where Jax was going with this, but he waited to see what he said.

“I haven’t seen you swim yet, but I imagine that you’re an excellent swimmer, better than a fish.”

“Of course, I am. I’m a siren.”

“So, please understand that I meant it as a compliment. But if it bugs you then I will never use it again.”

Erik smiled against the man’s chest. “No one besides my mother has ever given me a pet name before. Everyone calls me *Dǫglingr* Jerrick, or Erik, or your highness. Please keep using it. I quite like it. I jumped to the wrong conclusion and I’m sorry.”

“No apology needed. Now, you fell asleep before you were able to eat lunch. I’ve got some sandwiches, or I can call for dinner.”

“Soup? I’ve always wanted to try soup. I’ve read about it in books but for obvious reasons we can’t really make it under water.”

“Soup it is. Anything specific?”

“Something that’s not fish? I’ve had enough of that to last me a lifetime.”

Jax chuckled, “I could imagine.”

He pulled out some type of device that Erik had never seen. Erik watched in fascination as it lit up. Jax pressed on it like he was pressing a button and suddenly it was making a noise.

“Hello?” a voice said. Erik jumped. There was actually someone talking through the little box.

Jax cackled at his reaction. “Hey Sara, what kind of soup do you have ready?”

“Potato and Leek, Halibut Potato Chowder, and Mushroom Barley.”

“Send a bowl of Potato and Leek and a bowl of Mushroom Barley with some of your flaxseed bread and raspberry jam.”

“You got it, Jax. Should be there in a few minutes. Would you like some salads, too?”

“Sure.”

The device beeped and Jax sat it down.

“That little box lets you talk to people in another room?” Erik asked.

The alpha nodded. “It’s called a phone, specifically a smartphone. That,” he said pointing to another device that was across the room, “is a rotary phone, it has a wire that sound runs through. Its older technology, and not used much anymore.”

Jax went on to show Erik how a smartphone worked. He explained what social media was and the fact that he could play games on the phone too. Erik wanted his own. But Jax said it wouldn’t work underwater.

“What if I use a waterproofing Song?”

“Um, I don’t know what that is,” Jax replied.

Erik giggled. It was his turn to explain. So far, Jax hadn’t treated him like he was dumb when he asked questions that Erik was sure a pup would know. Instead, the alpha just patiently explained.

A knock on the door disrupted them before he could tell Jax what a Song was. Jax climbed out of the bed they were still sitting in and walked across the room. At least Erik knew how to walk. *That* would have been embarrassing. He privately thanked *Rán* for the cove he and Dare had found centuries ago.

The most wonderful scents filled the room when Jax returned with a tray full of food. Two bowls were steaming. Erik hastily climbed out of the bed, only to have to catch himself from faceplanting onto the floor. Luckily, Jax didn’t seem to see his blunder but instead was setting the dishes onto the table.

He sat down at the table and inhaled. “It smells good.”

“It is. You can try both soups if you like. I can eat the one you don’t want, as I like them both. The bread is really good with the jam, or you can eat it plain or with butter too.”

“Can I try it all three ways?” Erik asked.

Jax nodded. “Of course. You can also use it to soak up the bottom of your bowl.”

Erik looked around. It appeared he could pick up the bread with his hands, but how did he eat the soup? The salad, as Jax called it, he could probably eat with his hands as well, but there was something runny on it so it would probably make a mess.

Jax must have noticed his conundrum. “You’ve never used utensils before, have you?”

Erik shook his head, his cheeks heated, “I think I’ve read about them, but we usually just eat with our hands.”

The alpha ignored Erik’s embarrassment and showed him out to use the fork, knife, and spoon and soon he was shoveling delicious food into his mouth. He seldom had cooked food. There were some Sirens that used their Song to cook their food but generally merpeople just ate the various sea creatures and plants raw.

Half the bowl of the mushroom soup was gone before he realized he hadn’t tried the other one yet. He eyed it, but if he tried that one, Jax wouldn’t have any.

The alpha chuckled. “Go ahead. I can have them send up more.”

“Oh, my *Rán*, I’m eating like a shark,” he cried in embarrassment.

Jax looked confused by his statement for a minute before he smiled. “On land when someone is inhaling their food we say, eating like a pig. I’m assuming that’s what you meant.”

Erik’s cheeks bloomed a crimson red. “I’m so mortified,” he whispered.

“*Beagán iasc*,” Jax murmured reaching for Erik’s hand. “There is nothing to be embarrassed about. We all do it.”

“Thank you.” They finished their meal in silence. Jax never did let go of Erik’s hand. Not that the omega wanted him too.

Erik wiped his mouth with the napkin. He wanted to eat soup all the time. Both kinds were delicious. After confirming he was finished, Jax ate the remainder of the soup.

Chapter 5

"Now that your tummy's full, what is a waterproofing Song, exactly?" Jax asked the pretty omega as he led the man over to his couch. He wanted to show Erik everything he could. He had no idea how long the siren was going to remain in his care, or if he'd ever see him again after he returned to the sea. But he also wanted to know about Erik and his world as well. How did one live underwater fulltime? How did they eat? What did their city look like? Jaxon had a million questions.

Erik sat elegantly on the couch. For someone who didn't walk often, or at all, he was very graceful. Jax could have sat in the armchair or one of the many other spots in his small living area, but he chose to sit right next to the sexy little minx. Erik innately leaned into him.

"Well, it's a specific Song that waterproofs whatever item that the singer wants waterproofed, for example, if I wanted to take a book underwater, I'd sing a Song first to waterproof it."

"So, a Song is like a spell?"

Erik nodded. "Kinda. But Songs are specific to a person and usually can't be shared. There are some generic Songs that everyone with the ability to Sing can use, but most are made by that person. Dare and I, being twins, can share Songs, which is super rare, even in twins. *Streð mik,* don't tell anyone that. That's supposed to be secret."

Jax nodded. He wouldn't tell a soul. Not even his Alpha. "So, what can sirens do with Songs?"

Erik didn't seem to be paying attention suddenly though, he had a kind of distant look. Before Jax could worry, though, his gaze became clear again and he smiled, "Dare's awake." The man stood before Jax could respond.

Well, that was confusing, and it must have shown on his face.

"My sibling and I can speak telepathically." He turned and started walking towards the door before Jax was able to pick his jaw up off the floor. Today had just been a bizarre day. Why couldn't this shit happen when Brody was around? But then again, he might not have had the little minx in his bed if it had.

"Oh, and don't tell anyone about that either," Erik added as they left the room.

Jax, for his part, only nodded again and followed along. It seemed like the omega didn't need directions getting back to Hagatha's infirmary. Since he was a prince, he probably lived in a beautiful underwater castle. Oh shit, did Atlantis stem from mermaids? Erik spoke Old Norse but were there sirens in Greece too? After all, Atlantis myths had been around far longer than Vikings.

Jax was so lost in his head that he hadn't realized they had already made their way to the infirmary.

Dare was now sitting in their human form in a bed with their right leg propped up. They smiled when their brother entered the room.

"I'm so glad you're okay," Erik said rushing to his sibling's side. "I'm so sorry," he repeated.

The twins had their foreheads together. They were whispering so fast in Old Norse Jax had no idea what they were saying, but he figured it was a private moment anyway, so he stepped out of the room.

While Erik had been sleeping, he'd sent a text to Brody and Sean in their group text to let them know about the sirens. He could have just texted Brody, but Sean was a Lt Commander in the guard and brother-in-law to the Alpha, so he'd find out anyway. Plus, they were both his best friends.

While Jaxon was older than both Sean and Brody, both men had followed him around like lost pups until they were adults. They were his brothers, even though Brody was technically his cousin and Sean was the adoptive son of Brody's valet.

While Brody and Caspian were twins and should have the strongest bond, they grew up not knowing about each other. Brody was really trying to have the brotherly bond with his twin as he should have had since birth but both men were still struggling to find their groove.

Maybe one day Brody would be more connected to his biological brother, but Jax hoped it wouldn't change the dynamics between the three of them. Jax really shouldn't worry about it, but he couldn't help it. As an only child he clung to his cousin and their best friend and didn't want to lose that brotherly connection.

The group chat was at the top of his history. When they were just sightings he'd put it in the wait-to-tell-Brody-until-he-returned-home pile of things to update Brody on. But once Erik and Dare showed up, he texted them. However, this was the first chance that he'd had to check on the replies.

Brody: Sirens!! Lil ::fish emoji:: ppl?
Sean: ::mermaid emoji:: ??????
Jaxon: Dont call em either of those things but ya.
Brody: Theyre supposed 2b extinct.
Jaxon: Obv theyre not, r as btfl as legends say.
Brody: Orly? Does sm1 hv a crush?

Jax sniggered. His cousin knew him all too well. Of course, he had a crush. Erik was smoking hot and just his type. Smart, sassy—even though he hadn't seen a lot of that yet—and outgoing. He would totally fit in with Flynn and Caspian.

Jaxon: Mb, theyve gotta return 2 the sea tho.

The three dots lit up and disappeared a few times as Jaxon waited for the reply. He wasn't sure what he wanted either of them to say. Sean he was sure would say something crude, so he wasn't surprised when his reply came in first.

Sean: 1 9t stand baby.
Jaxon: ::eyeroll emoji:: omg, ofc ud say that.
Brody: its Flynn, Seans a dumbass dont listen to him if u lk 1 of them then go 4 it. If they came 2 the surface o

Of course, Flynn would take over Brody's phone. Jax smiled at the image of the little redheaded fox reading the conversation over Brody's shoulder and then stealing the phone from the man. The omega was perfect for his cousin. He'd really come out of his shell after getting out from under the thumb of his evil stepmother.

"What are you doing, *sæti*?"

Jaxon actually startled; he hadn't heard his *beagán iasc* leave the infirmary. He slid his phone into his pocket without replying to his friends. "I was texting Brody and Sean." He didn't want the omega to ask him about what, so he changed the subject. "How's Dare?"

"They're okay. Annoyed that they're stuck in bed for a week or so until their leg heals, but they are, and I quote 'in the most comfortable bed ever'. Which, I mean, probably isn't hard since our beds consist of seagrass covered rocks."

Jaxon chuckled. "That doesn't sound very comfortable at all."

Erik shook his head. "It's not bad, we're more buoyant underwater. But yeah, not as comfortable in the air. So anyway, you've got at least a week to show me everything."

Jax raised a brow at him. "Oh really?"

Erik didn't miss a beat. "Well, I guess I could get some other hot alpha to show me around instead."

"Nope you're mine," he growled.

"I'm no one's," he replied as he strutted past Jax. Jax turned and watched the sassy man as he walked down the hallway. Fuck he had a nice ass. Erik turned his head and looked at Jaxon with a smirk. "You coming?"

Goddess, he was fucked.

Chapter 6

"Með níurinn," Erik cried. Land people were amazing. Not only did they have the smartphones, which Jax got Erik his own. Jax said that Hagatha spelled it so it would work anywhere, even if there weren't what Jax called cell towers. The witch said that Erik could waterproof it himself, which he'd done when he first got it. He also waterproofed Jax's.

Jax had shown Erik around the castle last night since it'd been well after dinner by the time they'd left Hagatha's. It was huge, like three or four times bigger than his castle under the sea. Of course, only the twins, their mother, father, and brother lived there so they didn't need a big one. Jax explained that the servants and some of the staff lived there as well as the Alpha's mother and Jax's father.

At one point they ended up in the gardens—which had a million assorted colors and styles—and Erik had thought they had a lot of coral reef varieties under the sea. But the most impressive thing that Jax had shown him was the pool. A manmade, miniature sea with fresh water. Erik preferred sea water but he still took off his clothes that dove in headfirst, showing off his tail.

When he'd emerged from the water Jaxon was practically drooling. Erik had decided that the man needed to cool off, so he splashed Jax with a face full of water. The alpha, in retaliation, dove into the water elegantly and chased after him, but soon figured out that Erik was too fast for him to catch.

His scales, though, did not agree with the water in the pool. Jax said it had a chemical in it to keep it clean. If he stayed here, he'd request that Jax put sea water in the thing. *Wait what, stay?* He asked himself. He shook his head at the thought. He couldn't stay, it was only a matter of time before his dad came after him and Dare.

Today, Jax said they were going shopping. It didn't sound too exciting to Erik, but Jax said he needed his own clothes.

"This is amazing," he said as he looked around. The store was huge, and nothing like the stores back home. Clothes of assorted colors and styles hung on racks as far as the eye could see. There were aisles for people to walk down as wide as the streets back home in Særbjargborg. Tables with display cases had various kinds of jewelry. The lighting, though, was

horrific. Where sunlight was naturally bright, this was like someone took a thousand lanternfish and crammed them into a lamp made for five.

“I’m glad you like it,” Jax replied. “The men’s clothes are over there.” His slender finger pointed towards the back of the store. The clothing seemed to change as they walked, broken up by type. The signs overhead told shoppers what section they were in, or at least that’s what Erik assumed since he couldn’t read them.

“So, where do I start?” he asked Jax when the alpha finally stopped.

The alpha kind of shrugged and turned a bit pink. “I um, I’m just a jeans and t-shirt kind of guy, but I figured you’d prefer this,” he replied waving his hand around.

“High Commander!” a younger man about Erik’s size called out. He weaved his way expertly through the racks of clothes. Whereas Erik’s hair was long and as white as could be, this man had short, bright red hair, styled in a pomade. He had some type of markings around his green eyes and glasses that framed his face.

“Henry, thank *Danu* you’re here,” Jax said exasperatedly, as if the clothes themselves offended him. “This is Erik. He and his twin, Dare, will be staying with us for a while, and they need some clothes.”

The man nodded his head and studied Erik with an expert’s eye. “Of course, sir. Did you have anything in mind?” he asked Erik.

It was Erik’s turn to blush. His cheeks felt like they were on fire. He touched one, as he wasn’t used to the feeling. Sure, he’d been embarrassed before, but the feeling was different in his siren form. Thank *Rán* he could understand the man though. Hagatha was kind enough to help him create a translation Song before they’d left this morning.

“Um, I’m a siren. I’ve never really needed clothes before.”

Henry’s eyes lit up like Erik was a wet dream or something. “Well then we’ll just have to get you a bit of everything then, won’t we love.”

Before Erik knew what was happening, he was being dragged off, but it only took him a second to catch up to the other man. Jax followed behind as Henry started talking excitedly.

“Let’s start with underwear,” he said stopping in a new section. “Do you have any on right now?”

Erik nodded. Jax had explained the basics to him before he left. “Jax said they were boxers,” he replied. Henry continued to ask him several questions and had him feel the material of a few different types of underwear.

Based on Erik’s underwear selection Henry ran around and grabbed a whole bunch of different items before pushing him into a changing room. “Now make sure you take those boxers off and put on the manties before you try on everything else. Come out once you have an outfit on.”

The pants were the easy part, although some where harder to put on than others. But *Rán*, they made his ass look good. As for the manties, he loved them and picked out several pairs. They were silky, like his tail, and felt nice against his cock. And he absolutely loved the ones with lace.

Henry had even snuck in a few really sexy ones he called lingerie, but he said that they were only for sexy times in the bedroom.

“I love your hair, by the way,” Henry said as he applied a small amount of kohl liner around his eyes. “It stands out all by itself, but let’s put some chalk in it, to make it pop even more.”

And that’s how Erik ended up in a fitted, blue-black satin dress shirt with the sleeves rolled up and the top button undone, dark wash skinny jeans, and light-blue Converse. His look was complemented with a thick streak of blue in his hair, kohl liner—which he learned were the markings that he saw around Henry’s eyes earlier—raspberry lip gloss, and round sunglasses with red mirrored lenses.

“Feck me!” Jax said when he walked out. Erik had been showing Jax possible outfits all morning. However, this was the finished product he was wearing this out of the store. Jax reached out and pulled him into his arms. “You look sexy as feck.”

Erik giggled, “Henry said ‘damn girl.’”

“Mmm, sounds about right. You ready to get lunch?”

Erik nodded. He was, but at the same time he didn’t want to leave Jaxon’s arms.

The alpha must have had the same notion because he didn’t let him go. Instead, he looked over Erik’s shoulder. “Bill it to my account?”

“Already done, High Commander. I’ll have all this packed up and delivered to the castle in a few hours.”

Apparently, being royalty had a few perks, as Erik had a sneaking suspicion that other people didn’t get the same treatment. Not that Erik wasn’t a stranger to the privileges of being royalty but sometimes he felt like there were disadvantages to it, as well.

“Let’s go before I ravish you,” Jax whispered, his lips a hairs’ breath from the shell of Erik’s ear.

Erik whimpered. He wanted that, more than he’d wanted any other man before.

The alpha growled before tearing himself away from Erik. “Our first kiss won’t be in the middle of a store, *beagán iasc*.” Jax spun him around and led him out of the store. There was a nice breeze in the air, and it was a perfectly sunny day.

Jax led him from the shop to the other end of the shopping center where there was a little Spanish Bistro. A waiter promptly greeted Jax, who rolled his eyes at the use of his title. The man gave Erik a once over before turning and leading them to an outside table.

“Would you like me to order for you?” Jax asked.

Erik’s smiled, “Please.” And it wasn’t just because he didn’t know what anything was. Normally he hated when alphas ordered for him. However, Jax asked him instead of assuming and Erik wanted this man to care for him.

“I know you said that you wanted to have something other than seafood, but their *paella de marisco* is to die for.”

“I trust you,” Erik replied. Which apparently was the right thing to say because Jax’s face lit up like it was Christmas.

After the waiter left with their orders, Jax started up the conversation again. “You seemed to enjoy shopping.”

Erik nodded, he very much enjoyed shopping. “It’s not very fun in Særbjargborg since we don’t wear clothes, so I was a little hesitant when you said something, but I loved it. All the bright colors and unique styles. I can look fabulous without standing out like a sore thumb. Don’t get me wrong, I love my hair and my tail, but my coloring is rare. Most merpeople have blueish-green hued tails, while Dare and I have blueish-purple tails. My snow-white hair is also a rarity.”

“Wait you said merpeople. Aren’t merpeople different from sirens?”

“Mmm, yes and no. All sirens are merpeople, but not all merpeople are sirens. A siren is simply someone blessed by *Rán* with the ability to Sing. However, as a race we call ourselves sirens.”

“Wait that makes no sense,” Jax replied. “If not all merpeople are sirens, wouldn’t you be called merpeople?”

“You would think. However, when *Rán* and *Ægir* created sirens we all had Songs. Sirens mixing with humans over the years diluted bloodlines and now, unless you’re a descendant of *Rán*, you’d most likely be born without the gift of Song.”

Jax seemed engrossed in his people’s history. Erik knew it better than most because he loved to read. Many of the books in their officially library were history books that told the stories of *Rán*, *Ægir*, and their daughters.

“How do you know all of this? You’re not that old, are you?” Jax blushed. “Sorry, I shouldn’t have asked that,” he added quickly.

“It’s fine. Sirens usually live for a few millennia, the oldest on record I believe was two-thousand and eighty-eightish when they died. Father is over a thousand, mom I think is around eight hundred, although I never asked that question.”

Jaxon chuckled. “That’s probably a good idea. Women never like being asked their age.”

“Anyway, to answer your question, I’m two hundred and forty-eight. And as you can probably imagine there’s not a lot to do under the sea except swim, read, and play board games. We don’t cook so much as

prepare food, but even that's more of a seldom thing. Usually, we just eat whatever seafood has been gathered by the servants."

"So, what brought you and Dare to Ireland?"

"Dare and I've always had an 'unhealthy obsession' with humans," he said using finger quotes. "We got in trouble a bit ago and this is like our last big hoorah before we're forced to settle down."

The waiter came, placed their plates, and asked if they needed anything else before leaving again. Erik took a drink of water.

"Who told you it was unhealthy?" the alpha asked.

"Dare and I have another clutchmate, Maisesis. He's got a stick up his ass and is the heir to the throne. And even though he's only a few days older than Dare and I, he acts like he's a hundred years older."

Jaxon looked confused, but his mouth was full so he couldn't ask whatever question he wanted to, so Erik went ahead and took a bite of his own food. "*Með níurinn*, this is delicious."

"Okay, what's that mean? You've said it before," Jax asked.

Erik made a face while he thought about it, "it really doesn't mean anything, I guess. It's more of an expression, like when you thanked *Danu* earlier when Henry showed up. You can't really thank *Danu* since she's a Goddess."

Jax nodded his head in understanding. "That makes sense actually."

The waiter came to check on them and they ate a few more bites before continuing their conversation. Not once did the conversation stall, even though they were literally from two separate worlds. After lunch they headed returned to the castle.

Chapter 7

They couldn't get to his room fast enough. Yes, Jaxon had lots of paperwork to do. There were some reports on possible locations of his uncle that he had to pore over but the only thing he could think about was the sexy man in front of him. Erik was beauty personified. If he was a descendant of *Rán* he could only imagine how beautiful the Goddess had been.

Erik seemed to be in as much of a hurry as he was. It was like they were on an unstoppable collision course, and they were going to crash and burn any second. Jaxon wanted to be in his rooms when that happened. They passed DC O'Sabre in the hallway where Jax told him under no circumstances was he to be disturbed before they continued.

He wasted no time closing the door. Not even seconds later he was being pushed against it by the smaller man. Erik was surprisingly strong. Probably from all the swimming he did. Before he could comprehend what was happening soft lips met his. The omega then proceeded to crawl up his body like a spider monkey. Jax snorted when his mind conjured a picture of a siren with spider-like arms, but Erik didn't seem to notice.

He nibbled at Erik's bottom lip before licking at the seam.

Erik whimpered against Jax, going pliant. His mouth opened with a soft sound. His tongue delved in and claimed what was his. Licking every nook and cranky. Erik gave as good as he got in the most heated kiss ever.

They pulled apart breathless. "Wow."

"You can say that again," Erik smirked.

"Feck, baby. I want you."

"Take me please." Erik dove back in for another kiss, stealing Jax's breath away. Thankfully, he could walk his rooms blindfolded so it didn't take him that long to navigate to his bed even with his arms full of omega.

He realized he was half naked already once he tossed Erik into the middle of the bed. He wasn't even sure when it happened, but he didn't care either. Kicking off his shoes and pants he climbed onto the bed between Erik's legs.

The man's sexy as sin skinny jeans were literally pasted to his body and hid nothing. Had he gone commando?

Jaxon kissed Erik fiercely growling as his hands worked Erik's pants opened. He didn't wait for Erik to discard the clothing. Instead, he shoved

his hand inside intent on wrapping it around Erik's bulging member. His brain practically exploded when his fingers brushed against something very silky.

He forced himself away from the kiss to look at what he was doing, "Feck," he sighed when he exposed the hidden surprise in Erik's pants. The man was wearing satin manties with lace trim, which matched the blue he had going on in his outfit. "That's so hot." The tip of Erik's uncut cock was peeking out from underneath the underwear, a bead of precum spilling from the tip.

Jax's finger grazed the tip, swiping up the delicious nectar and pulling a groan from his omega. Erik's distinct honeycomb and sea scent filled the air, making Jaxon lick his lips. Only inches away from Erik's dick he looked up to see the omega watching him, panting with his eyes blown wide.

"Please," he whined, not knowing quite what he was begging for.

"I've got you, *beagán iasc*." Jax whispered a hairbreadth away from Erik's hot skin. His lips caressed the inside of Erik's thigh, placing the lightest, open mouth kisses along it until his nose was in the crevice where thigh met pelvis.

Jax again was overwhelmed by Erik's scent, it was stronger than it should be.

"Baby?" he stated pulling slightly away from Erik.

A whimper tore from the man's throat.

"Erik, *beagán iasc*, I need you to look at me," he said again trying his damnedest to keep a clear head.

With a wiggle the omega locked eyes with Jax.

"You're in heat, sweetheart. Tell me now if you want me to stop."

Erik shook his head, his eyes still unfocused with lust.

"I need words, Erik."

Jax watched him, it was getting harder by the second to wait for Erik's response, his alpha pushing him to claim what was his.

"Don't stop, *sæti*, please don't stop."

Jax surged up and kissed him to with an inch of his life, tasting every inch of Erik's mouth as he silently coaxed the most delectable moans from Erik. "Never," he murmured against Erik's skin. His lips followed an invisible trail, kissing Erik's jaw and neck before sucking in one of his nipples.

Erik lay helpless underneath him, bucking his hips seeking friction against his aching cock.

"Jax…please…more" he begged on repeat.

The alpha just smiled against Erik's skin, but soon he too was impatient. His claws sliced through Erik's pretty underwear—he'd buy him

more. Erik's long slender prick bounced against his skin dribbling precum over his stomach.

When Jaxon's fingers found Erik's entrance the omega was already dripping with slick, his hole loose and ready for his alpha's dick.

Jaxon shoved two fingers in, curling them to find Erik prostate. The omega's back lifted from the bed as he bowed up, crying out.

"Feck, sweetheart, you're so beautiful like this. Begging for me."

"Inside. Me. Now," Erik demanded.

Not one to leave his omega hanging Jax obeyed. His own cock dripped precum, ready to breed the man below him. With one last kiss to Erik's inner thigh, he crawled up Erik's body taking him in a heated kiss as he lined up his cock.

The blunt head of his shaft sank into Erik's opening with little to no resistance. Still, he forced himself to push in slowly. However, Erik had other ideas. Canting his hips, he took him balls deep in one swift move.

A moment was all it took before Erik demanded that he move.

Their hips danced in a song as old as time. Perfect harmony, as if they'd been together for years instead of just a day. Distantly Jax's brain thought about the repercussions of having unprotected sex during Erik's heat, but his alpha side growled, insistent on breeding this man.

He dipped his head and tugged on Erik's erect nipple with his teeth, then lavished over the sting with his tongue earning sweet whimpers. He continued his double onslaught, sucking and nipping at any part of Erik he could get to.

Erik bared his neck to him, submitting to him in the most intimate way. Jax suckled where he would claim him. His elongated fangs scraping against the soft skin. Erik's pulse sped up in anticipation. But Jax held off, he pulled away from the tempting offer.

His thrusts steadily grew in strength and power. The sounds Erik was making only increased his need to make Erik his and his alone. Jax felt his knot forming at the base of his cock.

Oh, how Jax wanted to claim the man below him, but they hadn't talked about it. He took Erik's mouth in a blistering kiss, his fangs nicking Erik's tongue, as streams of hot cum splashed against his stomach.

Their thrusts grew erratic. Erik cried out again when Jax's knot swelled inside of him. His blunt fingers grasped helplessly at Jax's back, trying to gain purchase against the slick, sweat-soaked skin.

Erik's channel clamped down as more cum shot from his dick, ripping Jax's own climax from him.

Endless waves of pleasure washed through him as he filled Erik with more cum then he ever thought possible. His lip bled where his unforgiving fangs dug into it in his fight not to lean over and claim his mate, because he knew now that Erik was his.

Jax’s arms gave out as the last of his orgasm faded. “Give me a minute,” he mumbled.

Erik’s only response was a whimper.

Seconds or minutes later—he did not know—he rearranged them, so Erik was resting on top of him. It would take a while of his knot to soften.

Glazed eyes looked up at him in wonder.

“I know, *beagán iasc*, I know,” Jax replied sweetly.

Chapter 8

“You sure he’s your mate?” Dare asked in their native tongue. They were hanging out in the bedroom Jax had given Dare. It was smaller than Jax’s rooms since it was probably only a guest suite, but it had all the luxuries that Jax’s did. Comfortable couches, a TV, which both Erik and Dare were enjoying watching daily. Too bad they couldn’t take one with them back to the sea.

“I’ve never been so sure of anything in my life,” Erik replied. It’d been a few days since they’d had sex for the first time. His heat went away relatively quickly but the spark between them hadn’t dimmed in the slightest.

Jax spent most mornings in meetings and the afternoons with Erik and sometimes Dare. The alpha carried the omega around like it was nothing, even though Dare had crutches that Hagatha had given them. His mate answered any question Dare or he had about life topside without exasperation or belittlement.

He was also teaching Erik English in bits and pieces. The only thing he hadn’t done was claim Erik.

“I’m so happy for you,” they said.

Erik smiled at his sibling, he was happy too, but what about their father? It was only a matter of time before his guards found them and then what? He’d be dragged back to the city where he was sure they’d be locked up?

Sure, they’d talked about leaving, but had they really meant it? Probably not. Erik loved the sea, and he couldn’t imagine not swimming in it, daily.

“Don’t worry about it, Erik, everything will work out how it’s supposed to. I just know it.” Erik hadn’t realized that he’d projected his thoughts to Dare, but it wasn’t anything new. It happened, especially when they weren’t paying attention. But he wouldn’t have it any other way.

“I hope so. I want to spend the rest of my life with him.”

“You know land shifters don’t live as long as us, right?”

“Yeah, but won’t the bond give him my life span?”

“Maybe, I don’t know. All the books we had—if we ever did—on interspecies mating are gone. Maybe Jax knows since they mate with humans and other paranormal creatures.”

“Maybe,” Erik replied. “But I don’t want to ask him about mating stuff because then we’ll talk about it, and it seems like we are both avoiding the subject.”

Dare rolled their eyes, “You should just complete the bond, then dad can’t say anything.”

“No, but I wouldn’t put it past him to lock us away. He as good as threatened it last time we got in trouble. And then what? Jax is left with a super long life without me?”

Dare flipped the channel; he’d been watching some DYI channel—HGTV maybe? Erik couldn’t remember. Dare loved the clothes Erik had picked out just as much as Erik had, and already stole a few pieces for his wardrobe. But he drooled over the interior design shows on the channel.

“Only until Maise takes over. I don’t see our dear older brother keeping either of us locked up. He’s a lot like dad, but he’s also our clutchmate.”

“You, maybe. He’s got a soft spot for you. But me, I sass him too much.”

Dare giggled. “That you do.”

Erik sighed and leaned back into the couch, they talked sporadically through the next couple of episodes. A knock on the door told Erik that the kitchen staff had brought up their lunch.

“Come in,” he called out in English.

As soon as the door opened his stomach turned. He was about to get sick. He didn’t want to puke on the nice carpet. Underwater they’d just open their windows, so the puke didn’t float around in their rooms while the water took care of the mess. That happened once. It was gross. Dare and he had to leave their rooms for an entire two days.

The bathroom, Dare whispered helpfully in his head.

Erik didn’t question it and ran towards the bathroom, barely making it to the toilet before his breakfast reappeared.

He heard his sibling getting frustrated with the staff as he tried to tell them to take the food away, however the communication barrier was preventing him from doing so.

“Hello?” his alpha’s voice came through the room. Funny, he hadn’t heard the door open again.

“Jax can you please tell the servants here to take the food away? Erik just got sick from the smell,” Dare asked in Norse.

It dawned on him then that Dare had called Jax on the cell phone. Jax repeated the message in English. The servants apologized to Dare before leaving.

Erik washed his face and dug around under the sink for a toothbrush to brush away the gross taste. Toothpaste was the best invention ever. They

had brushes they made from spelled seagrass and other materials, but they didn't have toothpaste under the sea.

By the time he came out, the servants and the offending food was gone. Before he could sit back down, his mate was there scooping him into his arms. "What's wrong, *beagán iasc?*"

Erik waved him off. "Nothing, I just got sick is all."

"From the smell of food? And we had unprotected sex during your heat. We need a pregnancy test."

"What?" he squawked. Theoretically he understood that he could produce fertilized eggs after his heat, but he never thought it would happen.

Before he could say anything Jax was carrying him down the hallway. "Babe,"—a term of endearment he picked up from some of the TV shows he'd been watching—"we don't get pregnant exactly."

Jaxon stopped midstride. The other day when they were having lunch, Erik spoke of his clutchmate, but then they got on another topic and didn't exactly go back to this one.

"Um, okay. Care to explain?" he said after a minute.

"Take me back to our room?" Erik replied.

Jax grinned like he won the lottery before he promptly spun around to head towards their rooms. Once there Jax sat in the couch but didn't let go, instead just arranged Erik in his lap. He loved Jax being all possessive like that.

"So, remember the other day, I mentioned Dare and my older brother was our clutchmate too?"

Jax nodded, "I remember. I was confused by that but then lunch was brought, and we moved on to other topics."

"Well, we have heats, same as other shifters. And the alpha or beta's seed fertilizes the eggs the omega or beta females produce. However, everything else is different. *Rán* created sirens based off humans but gave us tails and gills so we could swim like fish, so our reproductive organs are a combination of both. Our outer reproductive organs are hidden between our scales and work similarly to how a pair of boxers works. Let me tell you though, sex is much better with legs. So much better."

Jax smiled. "Maybe it's just because it's with me."

That could very well be the truth, but Erik wasn't going to just give it to his mate. He raised his brow like he didn't believe him. "Is that so?"

Jax grumbled and sucked on his neck leaving behind a mark. "Mmm, very much."

Erik rolled his eyes at the alpha's antics. "As I was saying, our eggs are fertilized in the same fashion as humans, but instead of the eggs implanting into a uterus, sirens lay their eggs. If none of the eggs were fertilized, then they are much smaller and not painful when our body discharges them."

“And if they’re fertilized?” he asked.

“Eggs about five or six centimeters in diameter are produced and we create a nest to protect them.”

“Wow,” Jax replied. They sat there for a minute while Jax processed what Erik had told him. “Wait, you keep saying eggs, not egg. And you said Maise was a clutchmate. How many eggs do you lay at once?”

Erik smiled, glad that Jax came to that conclusion all by himself, from what he read, humans only had one or two children at a time. “Five to Seven eggs are laid or secreted at one time.”

“Five to Seven! You mean—”

“No, no, no,” Erik said shaking his head at the same time.

“We won’t have five to seven hatchlings at once. Only two to three actually get fertilized. The secreted ones aren’t fertilized.”

Jax’s heartrate calmed considerably. “Oh good, Brody has triplets, and they are a handful. Oh Goddess! We’re going to have more babies around here.”

“We still don’t know if I have any fertilized eggs or not,” he reminded Jaxon.

“When will we know?”

“In a few days, max. My body will either discharge all of them naturally, or I’ll go into a labor that’s not nearly as intensive as human labor and deliver the fertilized eggs.”

“That soon?”

“Yes, but the eggs take around seven months to hatch.” Erik was resting his head on Jax’s shoulder while Jax ran his fingers along his back in benign patterns. “That feels good.”

“I’m glad,” Jaxon responded. “And there’s only one embryo per egg?”

Erik nodded. “Usually. True twins such as Dare and I are extremely rare. We shared an egg.”

“So, your mother only had one clutch then?”

“Yes, we don’t go into heat often, I’ve only had one before this one. I was actually surprised that this one came on so fast. Usually, we have two or three days.”

Jax kissed Erik’s neck. “That usually happens when we meet our mates.”

Erik sucked in a breath. It was the first time either of them had said it aloud.

Chapter 9

Jax couldn’t believe he had a fated mate of his own. No, it wasn’t love at first sight, or smell, or anything like that. When Flynn’s heat triggered after he got together with Brody, Jax hadn’t even thought about the fated mate’s thing. But when Caspian came home already pregnant, he remembered the tales of fated mates triggering the omega’s heat if they started getting to know each other.

Jax was glad reality was more discreet than fiction. Once he started getting to know Erik, he knew they were on a collision course of the most delicious kind. But that initial meeting didn’t trigger it, so they could have gone their separate ways without being any the wiser.

They still hadn’t talked about being mates. After he said it the other day, Erik clung to him, and they made love again. Jaxon understood, he really did. In the week that the twins had been there, Jax learned that Erik and Dare were notorious for leaving the confines of the underwater city. However, they were usually back before anyone knew they were missing.

Chances were, the guards were searching for them, and it’d only be a matter of time before they start looking on land. Jax wondered how they could track underwater, but he guessed the sirens had a way to do so.

He was pulled from his thoughts when his phone started chiming. Looking at the screen, he saw it was Dare. Erik’s sibling was super shy, and only talked when Erik was around. He’d finally started coming out of his shell around Jax, but usually when Jax appeared at the end of the workday, the room went eerily silent. “Hello?” he answered in Norse.

“Come quick, Erik’s delivering the eggs, we need to get him to the sea.”

Jax was already moving. He stood from his office chair and pushed it back; already out of the room before replying, “On my way.”

He didn’t wait for Dare to reply, instead he hung up and dialed Patrick, “O’Sabre,” the DC stated, as professional as ever.

“I’m taking the rest of the afternoon off. I’ll be down at the coast.”

“And the sirens, sir?”

“They’ll be with me. Have a limo ready for me in five minutes, I’ll meet them in the parking garage.”

“Understood.”

Next was texting Brody. Thank God the man was coming home tomorrow. Jax was so done with Alpha duties it wasn't even funny. It hadn't even been a year yet and he couldn't wait until Nessa was old enough to be the heir. Twenty-five years couldn't come fast enough.

He pulled up their group chat. The chain left off with him summing up what Erik had told him about siren reproduction.

Jaxon: Erik's delivering the eggs.

Three dots appeared but he didn't wait to see the response.

Jaxon followed the scent of his mate to Dare's room where Erik typically hung out while Jax was working. Usually, he knocked and waited for one of them to answer but he was in a hurry. He burst into the room. His mate was curled in the fetal position on the couch. Jax could practically feel the pain coming off the man. He scooped him up and Erik immediately wrapped his arms around Jax's neck and inhaled Jax's familiar scent.

"I've got you."

Dare followed them out, now walking on two feet. "This is so exciting," they said.

"For you maybe. This hurts," their brother replied.

"At least you're not human, they've gotta push huge, full-term babies out of them," Dare said with a shutter.

Erik groaned, whether from pain or what Dare said, Jaxon wasn't sure. He pressed a kiss to Erik's forehead all the same. "You can do this."

The siren beamed up at him, his smile wide, before he grimaced again.

The driver to the limo was standing at the back door and waiting for them. He opened the door without word.

"High Commander," he said with a nod.

Jaxon nodded back. He gently sat Erik in the car before climbing in himself. Dare was right behind him.

By the time the limo driver was in the car, Erik had climbed into Jaxon's lap, clinging to him like he was his lifeline.

"Where to, sir?"

"The cove."

The cove was a private section of the beach reserved for the Alpha and his family. Not only was it secluded, it had a little cove area—hence the name—where Erik could do whatever he needed to do in peace.

"You should change forms," Dare said when Erik cried out.

Jax immediately shuffled Erik around enough that he was able to help him get his pants off. The moment he was free from the confines of his pants his legs turned into a tail. He sighed in relief. Jax gathered him back in his arms. This wasn't the first time that Jax had seen him in his siren form, but it was still breathtaking.

While Erik's face stayed pretty much the same, small scales appeared near his hairline, his ears became pointed and web like, and his fingers were webbed as well. He also had small fins on both wrists, and while his skin still looked human in appearance, it had fine translucent scales that were tinted the same color as their tails. Erik's fluke was wide, almost twice the width of his waist.

Jaxon helped him remove his shirt as well. He wouldn't need it in the water, and he was sure the siren would feel more comfortable without it.

The limo pulled to a stop and Jax waited impatiently for the driver to come around and open the door. With Erik still in his lap he couldn't do it himself.

Erik's body was longer in his siren form, so it took a bit of maneuvering to get him out of the car, but with Dare's help they were able too.

"Hurry," Erik groaned. The contractions were coming fast.

Jaxon's feet carried him faster than he thought possible while keeping his omega safe.

Erik sighed as soon as his fluke touched the water. *Now what?* He asked himself.

"Go with him," Dare said coming up behind him. "And take this."

Jaxon looked down at what they were trying to give him. "Um, what's this for?"

"To carry the eggs, silly."

Duh!

Jax quickly stripped down to his boxers and took the basket from Dare. He started to wade into the water, Erik groaning impatiently.

"Oh, wait," Dare called. Jax turned around the omega was still standing there fully clothed, so apparently, they weren't going with their brother. "You're going to need to be able to breathe underwater. Stand still."

Dare didn't wait for a response but started Singing while holding his hand. The skin behind Jax's ears started to tingle. A quick touch with his hand confirmed he now had gills, and webbed fingers too. He looked down at his feet sure enough he had webbing between his toes as well.

"It will only last a little while."

He had no idea how long he'd be underwater with Erik so that wasn't comforting. "What do you mean a little while?"

"Long enough," Erik growled. "Now come on," he demanded leaving no room for argument.

Erik swam slowly. Jax's shifter vision helped with seeing under the water. They didn't go far from the shore, just far enough to find a cozy little spot with sand and a rock to lean on. Little fishes came out to say hi to Erik who cooed at them between his contractions.

Erik dug in the sand quietly, making a nest before turning and looking back at Jaxon.

Wordlessly, Jaxon pulled him into his arms and sat down in the sand. He instinctively started rubbing Erik's back where his scales started to turn from the translucent ones that protected his human skin to the colored ones of his tail.

"You're so beautiful," he said, surprised he could talk underwater. He hadn't even thought about it before saying it.

Erik groaned and tensed against him as the contractions came and went. Jaxon whispered nonsensical words as Erik strained against him. Before he knew it, four eggs the size of a football lay in the nest. The eggs shimmered in the water; the colors similar to that of Erik's scales.

"I'm going to sleep now," Erik mumbled.

Oh great. Now he had to get both Erik and the eggs to shore. Thanking the Goddess that water made things more buoyant, he gently laid Erik down in the soft sand before scooping sand into the basket. When there was enough, he tenderly placed each egg in the basket nest, making sure they were buried in the sand enough so they wouldn't knock into each other.

In the back of his mind, he was freaking out. Erik had said two or three, but he had four. He was going to have four little ones of his own, not to mention his cousin's triplets. At least Caspian only had one, right?

However, he didn't have time to think anymore. it was getting harder for him to breathe, meaning Dare's Song was wearing off. He scooped up the basket like he was Little Red Riding Hood before picking up Erik bridal style. It was difficult to swim with his arms full, but he kicked straight to the surface. He had no idea how far they were from shore, but he needed air, and he needed it now. He felt the second the slits in his neck finally closed completely, cutting off any oxygen he'd been getting from the water.

He gasped as he broke the surface. The waves brushed against him as he looked around. He could barely see the shoreline.

As he contemplated what to do, a fluke was slamming down in front of him splashing him with sea water. Seconds later Dare popped up giggling.

"Need some help?" they asked.

"You scared the shite out of me," Jaxon snapped. Yeah, he probably should have noticed them before Dare had splashed him, but Jax had a feeling that both Dare and Erik could breach without making a sound. The only reason Jaxon saw it at all was because Dare purposefully slapped the water with his fluke before finishing his jump. Besides Jax was distracted.

"Sorry. I brought a friend to help."

"Huh?" The confusion only lasted a second before a bottlenose dolphin poked his head out of the water, squirting water out of his blowhole.

“Well, I could carry Erik myself, but I can’t carry you too. And you wouldn’t be able to get back to shore right now, so Buddy here’s going to help. Grab onto his dorsal and hold on tight.”

Jax wanted to argue that he could swim, thank-you-very-much, but he was already exhausted from trying to tread water while holding his sleeping mate. Yeah, Erik would be fine if Jax let him go since he lived in water, but Jaxon didn’t want to let him go. So instead, he adjusted Erik, so his back was to Jaxon’s front and wrapped his free arm around Buddy’s fin.

Jax hadn’t even realized that Dare had grabbed the basket, but his soon to be sibling-in-law smiled before taking off with it. Jaxon tried to call out to Dare, but Buddy chose that moment to chase after the siren, so instead he got a mouthful of water. *Gross.*

Chapter 10

Erik hadn’t realized he’d be so excited about babies. Yes, his old brother was mated, but he hadn’t had any children yet. The children he interacted with in Særbjargborg were all older.

The two omegas—Will and Ollie—looked almost identical, even though they were cousins. The only difference was their hair and eye color. Where Ollie had his omega dad’s red hair and green eyes, Will inherited the Shadowpaw features of blond hair and blue eyes. If it wasn’t for her blue eyes, Nessa would have been a spitting image of Flynn, while Lucian was a perfect replica of Brody.

Erik couldn’t wait to see if his hatchlings would have Jax’s strawberry blond hair or his snow-white hair, or a mixture of both. He still couldn’t believe he had four eggs. He kind of freaked out after he woke up. At least he had about seven months before they hatched.

“You are just so cute,” he said in Norse. His English was getting better, but it was easier to use the Norse when mumbling to the baby. The noises he was making made little Ollie giggle.

“You’re good with him,” Caspian, Jax’s omega cousin, said.

Erik beamed. “Thanks! I never imagined this for myself you know. But now I’m going to have four hatchings myself soon.”

“My God, I can’t imagine,” Caspian replied. “I can barely manage one, and some days I don’t even feel ready for that.”

Caspian had been locked in a tower his whole life and believed he was human, so Erik could imagine the changes that he’d gone through, first learning that the supernatural existed and that he was one. Then mating and having a child right away. In a lot of ways Caspian was like a child himself because of his circumstances. But Erik thought the way he handled life now was amazing.

“I’m kinda freaking out, to be honest. Sirens hardly ever have one, but I wasn’t expecting more than two or three. So, four—at least I have seven months to prepare, you only have, what, three?”

“Yeah, that was scary. I hyperventilated a few times, but Sean’s an awesome mate.”

Ollie squirmed before crying out. “Oh, sssh,” Erik said. He instinctively lifted Ollie to his shoulder and started singing while he bounced Ollie up and down.

The other three babies that had been babbling away, and even all the adults went quiet. His sibling who was holding one of the triplets joined him in the lullaby that many sirens Sung to their children. Their voices were really stunning, even compared to other sirens. He wasn't being conceited about it. That's just what he and Dare had been told over the years.

Within minutes the babies were all snoring softly, "I didn't mean to put them asleep," Erik said when they finished his lullaby.

"It's quite alright," Brody chuckled. "It was incredibly beautiful. The tales of a siren's Song don't do you two justice."

Erik blushed deeply but he imagined Dare's red cheeks were even hotter than his own.

"But now I'm going to shoo you all out of the room before you wake my pups and omega up."

Erik hadn't even noticed that Flynn had fallen asleep until Brody said something. He placed Ollie down in his crib before leaving Brody's room with Jax.

"ARE WE GOING TO TALK ABOUT IT?" JAX SAID LATER THAT NIGHT.

Erik feigned innocence, "I don't know what you're talking about."

"Erik," the alpha groaned pulling him into his arms. They had just gotten back from eating dinner. Brody and Flynn had returned late the night before. Seeing his best friends with their mates had made Jax jealous. Both Brody and Sean had claimed their mates almost immediately, and he wanted his mate. He wanted that connection. But every time he tried to broach the subject, Erik would change it or run off to be with his sibling.

Erik tried to squirm away, but Jaxon held him tight. "*Beagán iasc*, please tell me what's wrong."

Erik sighed, "I don't want it to end," he whispered as if saying it too loud would break a spell or something.

"Oh, *mo shíorghrá*," Jax replied. "You are mine, you understand that, right?"

A nod.

"And I would follow you anywhere."

"You can't follow me to the sea," he whispered.

Jaxon reached out and grabbed Erik's chin forcing him to look at him, "I would find a way."

"What about your duties here?"

Jaxon didn’t even hesitate. “You are more important. I’d give up my title and leave Shadowall Bay if that’s what it takes to be with you.”

Erik nodded. “Okay.”

Okay?

Lips met his startled ones. “Claim me,” Erik begged almost desperately.

Jaxon smiled against his lips. “Are you sure, *beagán iasc*? If you’re really not ready, we can wait.”

Please, please say you’re ready.

“You’re right, we’re mates. I’m ready to be yours, please. I’ve wanted this since the first night we were together.”

“I’ve been waiting for two weeks to hear that, *beagán iasc*.”

Jaxon lifted him up and carried him to their bed. They might not know what tomorrow would bring but they sure as hell would figure it out.

With lips locked, he sucked on Erik’s tongue until he had no choice but to come up for air. He dove in for another kiss while crawling on the bed. If he was thinking with the right head, he’d be amazed he’d even been able to do that. But he couldn’t give two fucks about feats at the moment. He was about to make the man of his dreams his forever.

“Goddess, I love how you smell,” he whispered against Erik’s neck as he suckled on it.

The only response was a whimper as Erik pushed against him seeking friction against his cock.

Jax stripped the delicate omega of his clothes, tossing them unceremoniously to the floor. When he was done, Erik lay wantonly across their bed, a thin sheen of sweat already glistening against his porcelain skin. His cock stood proudly, dribbling precum against his belly. His balls were already drawn up tight.

Jax licked his lips and stroked his equally hard dick. He was addicted to this man, this siren. Entranced by him like the tales of old.

“Hold your legs up, sweetheart.”

Erik stared at him with his wide sea-green eyes, watching his every move as he lifted his legs. His pink, star shaped entrance twitched, already anticipating what was to come.

Jaxon crawled between his mate’s legs. He placed feather light kisses up Erik’s thigh. He nibbled along the way, marking Erik in every way. Until he was an inch away from that pretty pucker.

He breathed in, sighing from the sweet, tantalizing musk. He let his fangs pierce the delicate skin, tasting his life force for a fraction of a second below licking over the wound with his tongue.

Erik cried out, “please.”

Another a swipe of his tongue lapped up the clear fluid leaking from Erik’s entrance.

Erik’s hands found his hair, pulling in the most delicious way as he ate the omega out. Erik squirmed when he slid in a single digit. He curled it against Erik’s prostate while his mouth found the tip of Erik’s cock.

“Please… I can’t…”

Jaxon loved hearing his omega beg. He never thought he would be so wrapped up in one man, but now he couldn’t imagine his life any other way. He really meant it when he told Erik he’d follow him anywhere.

It wasn’t long until he was sliding three fingers in and out grazing Erik’s prostate in the process. With one last taste of Erik’s precum he slithered up Erik’s body immediately taking his mouth in a bruising kiss.

Blindly he reached between them and lined his cock up. With a single thrust he was balls deep inside his man. Sharp nails dug into his back, desperate for purchase. The pin pricks of pain made his prick throb in the tight heat of Erik’s channel.

He broke the kiss, gasping for air. Jax had read stories of sirens having talons but didn’t think it was true until this moment. He briefly wondered why Erik had held them back previously but brushed the thought aside for future Jax. Their eyes locked. Nothing else mattered right then except for his mate.

The sounds of skin slapping, grunting, and moans were the only thing that filled the room as he pounded into Erik feverishly. Copious amounts of cum shot from Erik’s untouched prick, sharp claws dug into his back, and Erik’s channel clamped down on him sending Jax over the edge into oblivion. He reacted on instinct; his fangs elongated, breaking the delicate skin above Erik’s collarbone.

The world spun as Erik’s pleasure became his. Glimpses of Erik’s life flashed through his mind. Time stood still, meaning nothing as their bond locked into place. Feelings of love and comfort came through their new bond.

Retracting his fangs, he licked the wound closed. He could already feel the scratches on his back were sealing shut but would never disappear. His mate had marked him as his.

Chapter 11

Erik, Dare, Flynn, and Caspian had taken to going for a swim at the cove when the alphas were working. While they had claimed each other, Erik was still holding back. He was waiting for the other shoe to drop. He couldn't explain it. He just knew it couldn't be this easy. And what about Dare? They deserved their own life and staying with Erik and Erik's mate wasn't it. As much as Erik didn't want to lose his sibling, he deserved his own happily ever after.

He also missed his mother and brother, and maybe if he was honest, his father. But he was scared of his father too. As much as he knew the man loved him, he knew that the kingdom would always come before Erik.

It was fun teaching Caspian to swim, and Flynn knew how, just not very well. The twins used their Song so Caspian and Flynn could swim with them, and they could show them all the coral reefs and things that humans wouldn't normally see unless they were in a diving suit. Which, in Erik's opinion, was no fun at all. The Song lasted for about an hour before they had to recast it.

The shifters response to seeing sea life for the first time made it fun again for Erik. And Dare was opening up to the two omegas. They'd never really fit in with other sirens. Most people saw them as royalty and treated them as such.

"These are all amazing," Flynn claimed about the shells in his hand. "I know you're probably tired of them, but they really are quite lovely."

"Are you kidding I love—" Erik was cut off as a hand wrapped around his mouth. Flynn's eyes going wide.

"*Dǫglingr* Jerrick, *Fólkhagi* Derrick," a voice said coolly near his ear as hands clamped down on him. Thankfully his mating bite was on the other side of his neck. He did not want his father's goons knowing about his mate. *Rán,* he wished people stop using their titles and birth names, nether one of them like it.

How did they find us? Dare asked. This was exactly what Erik had been afraid of.

Don't say a word about Jax or eggs.

Never.

"Let them go," Flynn demanded.

“Stay out of this, fox,” Ervin snarled in English, although how he knew English was beyond Erik. Ervin was his father’s personal bodyguard. He was the embodiment of alpha male. Even though he was older than Erik’s father, he had tried to get both him and Dare to mate him at one point or another. It was rather gross.

Alpha Power flooded the area, “I said let him go.” As Alpha Mate, Flynn was able to use Brody’s Alpha Power. He wasn’t nearly as strong as his alpha, and it was slightly different than the power that his father had as king. He wasn’t sure if it was because sirens were different from other shifters or what but that was neither here nor there.

“You think your puny little show of power will bend my knee, omega? Not even your Alpha has power over me.”

Struggling against the siren, Erik could do nothing but watch in horror as Ervin Sung a single word, dispelling the water breathing spell instantly.

“No!” Erik cried, straining against the man. However, it was no use. He watched as Flynn and Caspian both frantically swam to the surface. Before Erik could Sing a Song to help them Ervin’s hand clamped over his mouth.

Why couldn’t he have gotten a cool power when he mated, like Caspian and Flynn had? Caspian was an empath and Flynn had the ability to astral project. He didn’t know what gift would help him in this moment but having one would help, wouldn’t it? But not all mates got powers either. Brody and Sean—Flynn and Caspian’s mates respectively—didn’t score any cool abilities.

Both Erik and Dare were placed in cuffs. “Father’s going to hear about this,” he said channeling Maise as much as he could.

Ervin laughed cruelly. “You’re lucky if you’re not disowned after this, boy. Maybe instead of locking you away the king will permit me to mate you. Then I’ll teach you how a proper omega is supposed to be.”

“Neve—” he started to reply when a gagged was placed over his mouth by another guard. He was then manhandled into a cage that was already holding his brother.

A dolphin was harnessed to the cage. Erik had seen them before, but never been in one and he didn’t like it one bit.

Erik I’m scared. Father’s never let them lock us up like this before.

Erik leaned his head against his siblings, *I know. We just have to believe everything will work out.*

You think Flynn and Caspian are okay?

He nodded, they had to be okay. Erik would never forgive himself if his new cousins hadn’t made it to the surface. They were supposed to be safe in the sea with Dare and Erik, and they weren’t.

Overwhelming feelings of anxiety that wasn’t his made him cry out.

What’s wrong? Dare asked.

Jax. He's pissed. I can feel it through the bond.

Send him calming waves. It won't do anyone any good if he drowns himself getting to you.

Dare was right. He wanted Jax to think of the issue rationally. He had no doubt that Jax wouldn't stop until they were together again. Hopefully, his cousin could talk sense into him. So, Erik did something he hadn't done in a long time. He closed his eyes and meditated. Breathing even and deep, trying to push calm feelings through the bond.

It worked; he could feel Jaxon calming down. After a while he even felt feelings of love and determination come through the bond.

Chapter 12

It was déjà vu. Erik lost count of how many times they had gotten in trouble and been reprimanded over their antics in the last two-hundred years. The only difference was this time they were both still in cuffs.

His father hadn't said a word when Ervin brought them in, in a cage, and then dumped them unceremoniously out of said cage.

Their mother had swum over to them and hugged them both. "Thank Rán you're okay," she said before father called her back. She left with a sigh, returning to her place on the dais right next to his father.

"Jerrick Søkonge," his father called out formally.

Erik moved so he was slightly closer to the throne than Dare was and bowed his head.

"Yes, my Fylkir," he replied with the same formal tone of his father's cadence.

"Son," he said softer. Matheis paused then sighed. "I'm at a loss of what to do with you. You and Derrick are unique, the only twins in the history of the royal family. Your Song is more powerful than even mine, and together, I'm not even sure what'd you be able to do.

"But I can't have you running around here disobeying my orders. Not only did you disappear for almost two months, Ervin said you were interacting and even used your Song on shifters, exposing us all. Is that true?"

"Yes father," Erik replied there was no use denying it. "But please, Dare didn't do anything, I acted alone, they were merely tagging along."

Erik swatted Dare with his fluke when they tried to move past him. There was no reason for both of them to be punished. Dare was always the follower, so Erik would take any punishment.

We both chose to leave, Dare said grumpily through their bond. *Stop trying to protect me.*

I will always protect you. Please just let me do this.

Dare sighed, they hated arguing and usually gave into Erik's wishes, *fine.*

Just don't mention the eggs or Jax to anyone.

I would never betray your confidence, they replied.

"Is that not always the case?" his father sighed. He sounded tired. Erik didn't really try to make things difficult for his parents, he just couldn't help

it.

Erik stayed silent. It was a rhetorical question as everyone knew the answer.

Matheis pinched the bridge of his nose. “And don’t think I don’t know about all the times you didn’t get caught, because I do. I only have two choices left. You can either mate Ervin now, or I take your Song.”

Gasps burst throughout the room. Even Ervin seemed surprised by the choices. If Erik had to guess, Ervin had talked Matheis into the mating option, but the man assumed that it would be the only option. Otherwise, Erik didn’t think that his father would have ever laid out the option of mating Ervin. He knew how much Erik loathed the man.

Taking one’s Song was serious business. It couldn’t be undone.

“Matheis!” his mother sobbed.

His father looked sad; he didn’t want to force either of these options on his child but as king he had to protect his people. If only he could meet Jax and know that they wouldn’t harm the sirens.

You have to tell him about Jax. Please brother.

Erik shook his head. *I can’t. What if he goes after them?*

But your Song. Please Erik.

“Please father, don’t take my Song.”

“I’m sorry, son.”

“*Faðir,*” Dare sobbed. They swam in front of Erik, their arms still bound behind their back. “Please.”

What are you doing? Erik demanded.

I’m sorry brother, but I can watch him take your Song.

“Please father, just meet them. You’ll see, the land people are so different than the stories of old.”

But Matheis was already shaking his head, “Erik’s made his choice.”

Please tell him, Dare begged.

“You’d rather lose your Song than mate me,” Ervin said astonished.

Even if Erik hadn’t already been mated, he would never mate with Ervin, the man just gave him the creeps, always had and probably always would.

“I’d rather die than mate with you,” Erik corrected.

“Your highness,” Ervin said turning towards Erik’s father. “Your son is thinking rather rashly. Perhaps there is another solution. Maybe Derrick can mate with me instead.”

Matheis narrowed his eyes at his guard. “Don’t think I don’t know that you’ve wanted one or both my children for years. Only the fact that you’re my trusted guard is what made me even entertain the idea of allowing Erik to mate with you. However, do not overstep your bounds. I will never force my children to mate someone they do not want.”

His father had always had a soft spot for Dare. They all did. His sibling was sweet and innocent, and Erik was always getting them in trouble. If the situation wasn't so dire, Erik would have laughed. His father hadn't even entertained the idea of allowing Dare to mate Ervin.

Don't, he said to them, know that they would offer to mate Ervin. *You cannot. This is not your punishment to take.*

But if I hadn't gotten caught up in the net, then we would have returned with no one the wiser.

I would not trade my days with Jax for anything. It was fate that caught you in that net Dare. We were meant to go to shore that day, just like I'm meant to lose my Song, he replied with a sad smile.

Erik squared his shoulders and nodded at his father.

"Ervin, release their cuffs. Everyone, clear the room," the king demanded.

"*Kærr,* please, there's got to be another way," Thelia sobbed grabbing onto her mate. Tears streaked her face.

"*Móðir,*" Erik said before his father could. As soon as his cuffs were released Erik swam over to his mother and wrapped his arms around him. "I'll be alright."

Her breath caught. Erik knew what she realized. She wasn't stupid. She pulled back and looked at him, wide eyed. And he knew that she knew that he was mated.

"Erik," she whispered.

He shook his head with pleading eyes.

"Very well," she replied with a nod. She left without another word.

Dare glared at him for a solid minute before they spun on their tail and left.

"Derrick," Matheis called right before they left the room.

His sibling stopped at the door but didn't turn around.

"The guards have been informed that neither of you are to leave the castle until further notice."

No response came from Dare either verbally or in Erik's head. They were pissed. Erik couldn't really blame them. If the situation were reversed, he'd be mad too.

"Son," his father said softly gently lying a hand on his shoulder.

Erik turned around slowly steeling his resolve. He had to do this. He had no other choice. When he looked up at his father, though, the man had tears escaping—siren tears were thicker than the sea water and glistened a bright green.

He launched himself at his father. The strong king caught him and wrapped him tight in his arms, "I'm sorry, *Faðir.*"

"I am too."

Erik wiped his own tears from his face as he pulled away.

“Are you sure? I can always call Ervin back,” Matheis asked.

“Do it.”

Matheis took Erik’s hands and squeezed them tight as his deep tenor filled the room.

At first it felt like he was getting a sore throat. He squeezed his father’s hands tighter as the sensation grew to a burn. Soon the pain was so intense it felt like his throat was on fire. Unbidden a scream tore from his throat. He fell to the ground in a whimper.

Chapter 13

Howls filled the air as the gray-black wolf ran through the woods, dodging trees with ease. His heart was pounding in his chest. Nothing else mattered except extinguishing the pain that seared through him. He wasn't sure what part of him was on fire, if anything. It didn't matter how far he ran or which way he turned he was blind to the world around him.

As suddenly as the pain came, it was gone.

Another howl filled the air, but he didn't stop. He couldn't. He had to find his mate. He panted, his body giving out as he broke free from the woods and onto the beach. Sand kicked up behind him as he barreled into the ice water. Fur turned to skin, a snout became a nose, hair grew, and the vivid blue wolf eyes turned to human eyes. Still, he did not stop.

Only the commanding howl of his Alpha forced his feet to pause. He whimpered as he fought his cousin's power, but it didn't relent. Silver fur crashed into the waves behind him.

"Jaxon! Stop." The Alpha Power wash through him. He stopped struggling against the invisible binds and went slack.

"He needs me," he complained.

Tears streaked down his face as he sobbed. His cousin pulled Jax against him.

"I've got you, cousin."

A second set of arms came around him. "Come back to us, brother." *Sean*, his brain provided. Both scents were soothing.

"We're going to find him, I promise you," Brody whispered. "Deep breaths."

Affection and calm flooded him, bringing him back from his insanity. He fell to his knees, hissing as the ice-cold water kissed his skin. Tears fell freely.

"Jax," his Alpha said softly.

"I felt it," Jax whispered.

"I know, I could feel it too," Brody replied. As the Alpha of the pack, Brody was in tune with the pack. And as Jax's mate was pack. If he concentrated, he could feel a pack member's pain or emotions. And if the sensation was intense enough, it could break through the man's mental walls.

Only hours had passed since Flynn called them frantically from the beach. By the time Jaxon had gotten there, Erik and Dare were gone, like they were never there. Only their clothes proved the twins had been there at all.

“Whatever caused the pain has stopped. Do you feel anything from Erik now?” Brody asked.

His two pseudo-brothers had pulled him from the water, and they were now sitting on the beach. The cool air along with the ice-water caused gooseflesh to break out along his skin, but he ignored it and focused on his connection with Erik. He was instantaneously flooded with the feeling of love. They hadn’t said it yet, but Jax could feel it. The was no pain to be found. *Are you okay?* he thought wishing he could speak to Erik telepathically like Dare could.

He got no verbal response back, but Erik must have been able to feel his worry. It felt like he was mentally enveloped in a hug, and he could practically hear Erik saying yes, I’m fine.

“Yes, you are right. He’s in no pain anymore and he’s safe. Whatever happened is over.”

“Good. Let’s get you back to the castle and warmed up. You need to stay strong; Erik would want you to protect your eggs at all costs. Mother birds stay with their eggs, so I’m thinking that you should be near them and love them like you would if the little ones were still in utero,” Sean said.

Jax nodded, Sean was right. He needed to take care of the eggs. They had a whole navy that was already out looking for the underwater city. Now that they knew sirens were not extinct hopefully, they’d be able to find them. Jax would do whatever it took to be reunited with his mate.

Brody stood first and held his hand out, Jax gripped it to pull himself up, instantly realizing something was different, not wrong, just weird.

The moonlight shone down on them enough for his to notice he had webs between his fingers. “Huh.”

His hand immediately went to his ears, sure enough right behind his ears were slits. He had gills too, did that mean he could turn into a siren now? Surely if that was the case wouldn’t he have a tail? Obviously, he didn’t, otherwise he wouldn’t be standing at the moment.

“Interesting,” Brody said looking him over. “You have that iridescent shimmer going on like Erik and Dare get when they’re in siren form. But you still have legs.”

“Odd for sure. Must be a side effect of your mating. Weird ‘cause Brody, Grizz, and I didn’t get any special abilities when we mated. Only our omegas,” Sean added.

“Go back in the water and see if you can go full siren.”

“Hell no, that water’s freezing. I can try tomorrow.” With a single thought the webbing and scales disappeared, and fur started to sprout. He

fell to his knees as his hands turned into paws. Now that he wasn’t in a frenzy he was freezing is balls off. Brody and Sean both shifted as well. The trek back to the castle was slower. His friends wrestling with him playfully, obviously trying to take his mind off his omega.

Chapter 14

A knock stirred him from his lethargic sleep. He wanted to scream go away, but he'd never be able to do that again. He understood his father's position but would never agree with him. Erik was well past the age that he needed to listen to his father at every turn. Not that he'd done that when he was a hatchling, but that was beside the point.

There were only two people he wanted to talk to. One was ignoring him, and the other he'd probably never see again. But that's not who was at his door now. No, that would be his mother. He could sense her impatience as she waited for him to open the door.

With a sigh he swam over and threw open the door. Before he could get away his mother enveloped him into a bear hug.

It was the first time he'd seen her, or anyone for that matter since his father took his Song a few days ago. Yes, Erik knew going in that he would lose his voice too, but he hadn't realized how difficult it would be not to even be able to scream with frustration. Sure, he could still scream, but with no sound coming out it wasn't nearly as satisfying.

His mother pulled away but didn't let him go. She had tears glistening her eyes. "Why?"

Erik shrugged; he'd have to learn sign language. There were a few sirens out there that were deaf or mute, but he could care less about any of that.

His mother brushed his hair back—their hair thickened in siren form, so it didn't float like human's hair but flowed as if they were on dry land—revealing Jax's mating mark. "A canine huh?"

Tears slid down his face as he thought of his mate. He reached across their bond seeking reassurance. His alpha didn't disappoint, waves of affection and love came back. Erik regretted not telling Jaxon that he loved him. Now he never would get the chance.

Would their bond fade with time?

Thelia pulled her son against her. He melted into her embrace and cried. He wasn't sure how long he stayed there. At one point his mother must have moved them to the bed because when he finally brushed his tears away, he was curled up in her lap like he did when he was little.

He laid his head on her chest and just listened to her steady heartbeat for a while. Eventually the door opened, and Dare swam in with a tray of

food. His sibling still wasn't talking to him, and it was starting to get on his nerves. They wouldn't even let Erik apologize.

As soon as the tray was sat down, they turned and left.

"They're mad at you still."

He nodded, not wanting to move. It was the first time he'd felt warmth since being forced back home.

"I can understand why. You stepped in and took your father's wrath like you always do."

He gripped her harder.

"I know, baby. Dare needs protecting, but they also need their brother, yes? You two were born at that hip and stayed joined at the hip ever since. Wherever you go they follow. They're just as lost as you are. Give them time."

He wanted to cry out, to demand to be allowed to go to his mate. He wanted to yell and scream at his father for keeping them hidden in this underwater tomb. But he could do none of that. The only person he could talk to wasn't talking to him.

I'm sorry, he wept for the millionth time to his twin.

A mental sigh and then a door being slammed shut was followed by, *leave me alone.*

Erik clung to his mother as she fed him pieces of plants and fish. He didn't taste any of it, too lost in his head to pay attention to the world around him.

"Are you going to tell me now why you didn't tell your father about your mate?" Thelia asked.

Erik sat up and raised a brow at her.

"I think you're wrong. I know you were protecting your him from your father. But even your father wouldn't deny a fated bond." She paused, "he is your fated, right?"

He nodded.

She huffed. "I respected your decision not to tell him the other day, but Erik you—" she paused suddenly, and her eyes grew wide. She looked him up and down like she was trying to figure out something.

Several minutes past as she studied him silently. His cheeks heated under her scrutinization. He wasn't sure what she was thinking, and it wasn't like he could just ask her. Oh, how he wished he had something to write with. After a thousand years separated from land folk writing supplies were in short demand.

When she still didn't say anything, he pinched her arm.

"Ow."

He lifted a brow again, *well are you going to talk?*

"You weren't protecting just your mate, were you?"

He shook his head.

“How many?”

He held up four fingers.

“Oh my, Erik. Are they safe?”

He nodded, of course they were safe, they were with their alpha father. They couldn’t be any safer.

Tears spilled from his eyes again. His mother pulled him close and whispered nonsensical words to him.

“I’m going to talk to your father,” she said after a while.

Erik clung to her and shook his head vehemently. *Please*.

“Alright, but you should tell him the truth. I know you’re scared for your mate and hatchlings, but Erik, he’s your father and he loves you, and he loves his people. Everything he does is for *all* of his people, which now includes your mate and hatchlings. Think about it, please.”

He nodded. Maybe his mother was right, maybe she wasn’t. However, *he* was too scared to test it, at least right now.

Chapter 15

Their brother was a self-sacrificing asshole. Not only had he protected Dare yet again, but he also let their father take his Song. The only way to take one's Song was to burn the vocal cords to the point that their body couldn't heal them, which meant Erik was now mute. Not that it stopped him from speaking mentally to them. But Dare was pointedly ignoring their brother even a few days later. It'd been the longest they've gone without talking. Well, Dare wasn't talking, Erik was annoying them constantly.

It wasn't like they could just go to another room. As far as they knew the telepathic ability between the pair was not affected by distance. Although, they've never been more than ten miles away from each other their whole lives, so they've never actually tested long distances.

Still, Dare did their best to ignore their brother. It was getting harder as their fury abated too. And the less enraged they were at Erik, the angrier they became at their father. It was time they did something. Besides trying to apologize to Dare, Erik had spent all his time locked in his room. He barely ate anything.

As mad as they were at Erik, Dare couldn't stand by and watch his brother wither away into nothing.

Which is how Dare ended up sneaking through the halls of the castle. As expected, every door to the outside world was guarded. They knew the guards well, so they knew which ones had Song and which ones were weaker than others. There was no way that Ervin could man all the doors to the castle with powerful guards twenty-four seven. So, Dare waited and watched.

It took them about a week to get the guards schedule down. By then they were no longer mad at Eric and had taken up talking to them again. They were able to get Erik to eat properly, but their brother was still depressed.

The king had Erik on lock down too, more so than Dare. Where Dare had free reign of the castle and didn't have a shadow, Erik was not allowed to go anywhere alone, except his room. Their father was taking no chances. So, it was up to Dare to fix this.

They had never done anything drastic on their own, always following Erik wherever he went. While they talked with their brother about things

they wanted to do that Erik might not, Erik was always the doer.

A MONTH AFTER THEY RETURNED HOME, DARE MADE THEIR MOVE. FRIDAY afternoon they took a nap. When they awoke, it was time. Swimming silently, they navigated the halls of their home, knowing that they might never be back. Or at least not free the next time they returned. They'd waited for when Bernt was on duty, he was the weakest of the guards. He had no Song, and he could barely fight. They honestly didn't understand why the man was a guard in the first place, but it benefited Dare in this moment.

Dare didn't train often, but as royalty they knew how to use a trident and hand to hand combat if needed, even if they weren't very good at it. They could best Bernt though, and that's all that they needed.

With a whisper he Sung. The Song was a lullaby meant to put hatchlings to sleep but it would make Bernt tired.

"Who's there?" the siren called out. But Dare could already hear the Song taking effect. They reached the crescendo, repeating the words with a faster tempo. Dare was quicker than the guard, wrapping his arm around the man's neck placing him in a sleeper hold. While it was harder to take sirens out this way, it was still affective. The Song, combined with the lack of oxygen, had Bernt slumping against Dare in no time.

They gently laid Bernt on the ground. Using another Song, they disabled the magic on the door. Like their father said, Erik and Dare were extremely powerful. Well now just Dare, but they didn't want to think about their brother never singing again.

Soon they were in the open ocean swimming away from the only home they had ever known.

Chapter 16

Jax was sipping his morning tea, going over reports. For over a month there'd been no sign of sirens anywhere and he was getting frustrated.

Their navy had sailed all the way to Greenland and back, the entire English Channel—more than once—the Irish, Baltic, and North Sea with no avail. They were currently searching the North Atlantic Ocean and even thought of sending a ship to the Mediterranean and possibly the Black Sea.

Along with searching for Erik in all surrounding major bodies of water, the SBG were still searching far and wide for any sign of Celestina and Alpha William. Brody could feel that his father was still alive, albeit weakening by the day. However, they were getting nowhere on that front either. It was like both the witch and the sirens disappeared from the face of the Earth.

"Argh!" he yelled pushing away the reports.

He pinched the bridge of his nose. His office was messier than ever, but he didn't give a shit. His only concern was finding is mate.

The eggs were growing by the day, he'd been able to start hearing heartbeats a few weeks ago. He'd already been scared to shit when they realized there were four eggs, but now he was just terrified. One of the eggs had two heartbeats. A set of twins! That was five pups.

How the fuck was he supposed to be able to take care of five children by himself? Sure, he had his family, a doting aunt, his father, his cousins, and their mates, and, hopefully, eventually his uncle as well. But what about his mate? Was he ever going to find him? He did not want to raise these hatchlings alone.

Where are you? He thought for the millionth time. Love pulsed through their bond like it always did when he got frustrated. But he also detected his mate's growing depression. He may not have been physically hurt, but Erik was not doing well at all. He needed to find him now.

"Still nothing?" Brody's voice pulled him from his thoughts. He hadn't even heard the Alpha knocking or subsequently opening the door.

Jax opened his eyes, his two best friends were standing in his office frowns on their faces. They were worried about him, and they had every right to be. Not only was he overworking himself, but he'd also lost weight and had bags under his eyes. His wolf hadn't gone on a run since that first

night Erik was gone, though he hadn't minded much since he too was focused on finding their mate.

"No, and Erik's depression is getting worse by the day. He tries to send reassuring feelings through the bond, but they are less frequent now."

"We'll find—" The door burst opened. Brody growled at the intruder.

"Sorry, Alpha," a breathless guard squeaked out between huffs as he bore his neck.

"Well?" Brody asked irritably when the guard didn't speak as to why he came bursting so rudely into Jaxon's office.

"Oh, sorry. Sirens, sir, a siren's been spot off the coast. They're swimming towards the cove."

Jaxon perked up, "how many?"

"Just one sir," he said taking a drink of the water Sean had thrust into his face. Jaxon had a minifridge in the corner filled with drinks and snacks for this very reason.

"Get a driver ready," Jax commanded.

"Already done, sir," the guard replied following Jax, Brody, and Sean out of the office.

"Very good, you're dismissed."

If the guard nodded Jaxon didn't see. His only thoughts were on the siren swimming their way. Was it Erik? Who else could it be? But if it was Erik where was Dare? He wouldn't leave his sibling behind. They were practically attached at the hip.

The limo was waiting for them like always when they arrived at the parking area. Jax climbed in followed by Brody and Sean. Technically, he should let Brody lead the way, but he didn't care about hierarchy right now, and apparently nether did his cousin.

The driver didn't have to be told that speed limits were no concern. He'd probably already been informed where they were going and why. The entire city now knew of Jax's mating woes.

They got to the beach in record time and Jaxon was out the door before the limo even stopped. He'd kicked off his shoes in the car. As he ran, he ripped off his pants and pulled his shirt overhead. The only clothes remaining were his boxers.

Over the last month, he'd determined that he had gained abilities to swim underwater better, such as the gills and webbed fingers and toes. However, he could not turn into a siren. Still, he was able to swim for hours and hardly tire. His skin no longer pruned from being submerged for too long. Unless he didn't shift into what he called his half-siren form.

He dove into the water as soon as he was knee deep, swimming as quickly as his body would allow. His eyesight was now as good underwater as it was in wolf form. He could see the floor of the ocean without issue. In the distance was a sole figure, swimming just as quickly as he was.

Dare. He knew that instantly, even though he could barely see the siren and from a distance they appeared identical. Jax couldn't feel the bond.

Even though it wasn't his mate, he swam as furiously as he had before. He sibling-in-law wouldn't be here without Erik unless things were dire. Add in the fact that they were swimming like a madman, and it told Jax that he was running from something.

"Jax!" Dare cried as they embraced.

Jax wasn't sure it was possible to be short of breath underwater but Dare surely was. They gulped a few times, barely staying afloat.

"Erik… Father… He took his Song."

What?! Dare's half sentences made no sense.

"He's not with you?"

Dare shook their head before passing out in Jax's arms. *What the heck is with sirens passing out on him in the water?*

"HERE," JAXON SAID WHEN DARE FINALLY AWOKE.

They didn't complain when Jax pressed a straw to their lips. Dare sipped the water slowly before sitting up.

"What happened? Why are you exhausted?"

Brody and Sean had left a few hours ago to attended to their own families, leaving Jax to tend to Dare. Not that he minded. He was very protective of his new sibling.

They took another sip of water. "I was sprinting for almost three hours. I left in the middle of the night, but I wasn't sure how long it would take before Bernt woke and rose the alarm."

"Bernt?" Jax inquired.

"One of the castle guards, I knocked him out to escape but choke holds aren't the same underwater. He probably awoke within the hour."

"You were a prisoner?"

"Pretty much," they said with a sigh. "Ervin, he's this really old guy that's been trying to seduce Erik and I—" a shutter racked through their body, and they made a disgusted face, "for like ever, is the one who found us…"

His eyes went wide as he paused mid-sentence. "Flynn and Caspian. Please tell me they're okay."

"Yes, *ceann beag*, they are safe."

They let out a breath, “Thank *Rán*. Ervin took us back to our father. Father gave Erik two choices. Mate Ervin—”

Jax growled, Erik was his.

Dare giggled. “—or give up his Song. Even if you weren’t his mate, he would never have mated Ervin. Father knew that.”

“Then why?”

Dare sighed, “Erik told you we were twins, yes?”

Jax nodded.

“Twins are extremely rare. Twins in the royal line have never before happened. Father can control anyone with his Song but us. No matter what he tried, Erik and I could always bypass his wards and break down his Songs. Father hoped that if we mated, our alpha mate would be able to command us.”

“Command you? Like take away your free will?”

Dare nodded meekly; their face was paler than normal. “Yes and no. It is punishable by death for a siren to use their Song to take away one’s free will unless the safety of the people is at stake. However, a strong enough alpha mate could command their omega and force their silence so no one would ever know they were being abused.”

“You think that’s what Ervin wants?” Jax asked.

“Yes, he’s always been a creep. As soon as Erik and I became adults he’s been trying to get between our tails.”

“Feck that, we’ve gotta get Erik out of there,” Jax growled. He stood and paced for a minute. He ran a hand over his face before looking back at the anxious omega. “What do you mean, give up his Song?” Jax already knew he wasn’t going to like the answer.

Dare went on to explain the rest of what happened when they returned to Særbjargborg. Jaxon paced the whole time, growing angrier by the second. How could a father do that to his child? No wonder Jaxon went crazy when it happened, it must have felt like being branded from the inside out.

“Rest. First thing in the morning we’re going to get Erik.”

“But how? Swimming around the cove with the help of a Song is one thing, but Særbjargborg is almost thirty-thousand feet below sea-level. Land people weren’t meant to be that deep.”

Jax smiled for the first time in a while. He shifted his hand and held it out for Dare to see. “You’re a siren now?” they asked in amazement.

“Not quite. I can still shift into my wolf like normal, but it’s like I gained a partial siren shift. I have the gills, webbing, and iridescent scales, but I don’t gain a tail and the only claws I can produce are my wolf claws.”

Wolf claws weren’t nearly as deadly as a siren’s talons. Those things were like daggers when they came out. There was a reason a siren’s mate marks were scratches along one’s back instead of a bite. Jaxon had only

seen Erik’s once, and that was briefly before he’d been able to sheathe them after they mated.

Chapter 17

“You cannot go down there by yourself!” Brody insisted early the next morning.

They had all gathered in the conference room near Brody’s office to hash out a plan. The kitchen staff had brought up tea and breakfast.

Dare sat quietly at the end of the oblong table sipping on tea and picking at some soda bread and rashers while the rest of them argued, not touching the food.

“This isn’t your decision Brody,” Jax growled in reply.

“I’m the Alpha of this pack not you.”

“And I’m the High Commander.”

They were at a loss of what to do or think. Father’s councilors never argued with him. Dare’s mother was the only one they’d ever seen argue with Mathesis and that was on a rare occasion and always behind closed doors.

Brody raised his brow and Jax huffed sitting down. “Fine you’re the almighty Alpha, blah blah blah. But Erik is my mate.”

With a sigh Brody sat back down in his chair as well. “I know, Jax. But what am I supposed to do? Watch my best friend and cousin swim off with no backup into hostile territory?”

Father is looking everywhere for you, Erik complained through their telepathic connection. *I can’t believe you ran off on me*.

Dare could imagine their brother sitting on the bed pouting, his arms across his chest and fluke twitching, wanting to move but being held stubbornly in place by the grumpy siren. Their flukes almost always moved. Even if they weren’t swimming it would swoosh lazily in the water.

They weren’t sure whether they should talk to Erik or not. So far Dare had been ignoring him, not wanting Erik to be an accomplice in their escape.

“…spent a century hiding from us, if we show up there with our entire navy it’s not going to be pretty,” Jax retorted to whatever Brody had said a minute ago.

Sean was there too, but like Dare he was just watching the two alphas squabbling.

“We won’t even be able to get to them so why does it matter how many ships we have?”

“Exactly!” Jax exclaimed. “One ship and everyone stays onboard unless I say so.”

“Jax is right,” they said, interrupting the pair. Jax and Brody had literally been having the same argument for the last hour. “Father would take an armada of ships above our city badly. Just Jax should go. Like I told Jax last night, land people weren’t meant to be that far below sea level. My Song alone wouldn’t be ample for the trip.”

“Fine, Sean and I go on a ship. We’ll take Hagatha with us. Do not lose your transmitter,” Brody replied. “Now eat.”

Stop ignoring me, Erik growled through their bond. After a minute he added, *fine, please just tell me if you’re safe.*

I’m safe, I promise.

He and Dare weren’t swimming that quickly, but they’d been keeping a steady pace. The backpack he wore was slowing him down a bit, but it and everything in it were spelled with a Song to keep the contents from getting waterlogged. That included the transmitter that was allowing Brody to follow behind them as Dare didn’t know how to give them directions.

They swam past shipwrecks, sea cliffs, coral reefs, schools of fish, and pods of whales. Kelp forests came and went. Dolphins swam with them, jumping and playing. Dare twirled and spun with the sea creatures, fitting right in like they’d been born there—oh wait they had.

Their smile was infectious. Yes, the pair of them were on their way to bring his mate home, but that didn’t mean they couldn’t enjoy the trip. While they mostly stayed underwater, Dare jumped with the dolphins a few times.

The trip was both the longest and the shortest trip of his life.

“Welcome to Særbjargborg,” Dare said coming to a stop.

Jax stopped beside the siren. Looking around all he saw was sea.

“Oh, duh. Stupid me,” they added after seeing Jax’s confused look. Dare Sung, their Song almost exactly like Erik’s.

Suddenly a world appeared in front of them. It was stunning. Words couldn’t do it justice. A stone castle stood in the distance, covered in multi-color algae. Lanterns adorned the city, flickering as whatever was inside them moved. Smaller buildings made out of stones, huge shells, coral reefs, and other objects that Jax couldn’t name spattered the area. There were

even a few buildings made from old shipwrecks. Clear alleyways could be seen.

“Wow.”

Tridents surrounded Jax as guards came out of nowhere.

“Derrick, what have you done?” Ervin asked.

“Jax is here to see father. He’s the Alpha Heir for the Shadowall Bay Pack,” Dare replied, he held his head up high as he faced off with the alpha guard. Gone was the shy person Jaxon met. In their place stood a royal. He could see them trembling. Jax wanted to grab their hand and say you got this. Dare wasn’t the bold one. They were channeling their brother for sure.

“Outsiders aren’t allowed in the city. You know that,” the man growled. “Maybe your father will see now that mating me is the only way to control the likes of you.” The siren wrapped his hand around Dare’s wrist so tightly that they were wincing.

Jax roared and lunged at the man belittling his sibling-in-law. He didn’t get far before tridents were pushing him back. Flynn had told him that the Power given to him as Alpha Mate hadn’t worked on this guard, but Jax didn’t care. He pulled every bit of Power he could from the pack. “Release him, now.”

Ervin’s eyes grew wide as he unwillingly released Dare’s arm.

“Cuff them and gag them both. Toss them in a cell.”

“Sir?” one of the other guards asked.

“You heard me.” The siren didn’t wait for his orders to be followed before he spun and headed back into the city.

Chapter 18

His sibling's frantic voice in his head pulled Erik from his stupor. *Erik! Jax is here. Ervin's taking us to the jail. Get father.*

He was already swimming out of his room. It was the first time he'd left since his father took his Song over a month ago. But his father was a creature of habit, so, he found him easily.

What do you mean Jax is here? Ervin's going to kill him. How could you bring him here?

After knocking, he waited for his father to call out before he entered the man's study.

It was one place that was devoid of water, spelled to hold the water back at the door. It made it easier to write. Erik flawlessly changed to his human form as he entered.

His father was sitting behind his desk doing whatever it was he did during the day. Erik didn't care or want to know.

"Son."

Like leaving his room this was the first time seeing his father since the man carried him to his room after taking his voice. He didn't know how to feel. His Song was part of him. All month he wondered if Jax would even want him if he knew Erik didn't have a voice anymore. Erik knew it was stupid, that his mate wouldn't care, but he worried even still.

Erik walked over to the desk and took a piece of paper and one of the pens. As a prince he was taught runes. Since writing materials were scarce, not all sirens were taught their written language. Erik was thankful that he was at that moment though.

> Dare has returned. He brought my mate with him. Ervin intervened at the border of the city, had them arrested and taken to the jail. Please Father, I do not know how long Jaxon can stay down here and be safe.

Matheis eyes grew wide as he read the note, "Mate?"

Jax nodded and showed his father Jax's mating mark.

His father opened his mouth and then closed it; Erik imagined his father was warring with himself. The king was furious that Erik mated a

wolf. But the side that was his father was happy that his son found happiness.

Finally, his father sighed, “Well come on, let’s go get them.”

That wasn’t exactly approval, but Erik would take it.

The guard that had followed Erik to his father’s door was waiting outside as soon as they exited the room. “Send someone to the jail and have them bring Derrick and his companion to the throne room. Find Ervin and have him come there as well,” he barked leaving no room for argument.

The guard turned and left, leaving them to their own devices.

“Retrieve your mother and brother for me.”

Erik nodded and turned to leave. His father’s voice told Erik he wasn’t pleased with him. Still, he wasn’t making Dare or Jax sit in the jail cell like he could, so there was that.

He found his mother where she was most days—her garden. The little clown fish fluttered around in their anemones. Beautiful coral reefs and other plants dotted the space as well. She Sung to them often and they grew as a result. Algae grew in abundance; varieties of seagrass dotted the landscape providing soft pillows here and there.

“Erik! You’re out of your room,” she called out. Her smile fell when she saw Erik’s worried look. “Oh no, what’s wrong?”

Erik pointed to his mate mark and then made a deliberate swimming motion and pointed to the ground. He really needed to learn sign language. This was a pain in the ass. Or he could just never let Dare leave his side again.

He chuckled at the thought of Dare translating Erik’s words. Yeah, sharks would fly before they did that.

“Your mate is here?” his mother replied.

He nodded.

“Show me.”

He turned without another word—or gesture in his case—leading her through the stone halls.

The next stop was his brother’s office. His mother summoned Maise to follow them leaving no room for argument.

Erik led them to the throne room where his father was waiting. His brother and mother took their places at his side. Erik stared angrily at Ervin who was already awaiting them. His father’s jaw was locked, and he was glaring at his guard, but he didn’t say anything.

A deafening silence filled the room as they waited. Erik twitched anxiously; he could feel Jaxon getting closer. He hadn’t realized the bond would do that, which made him more nervous. His fluke swished frantically. If he were in human form, he’d be tapping his foot.

After what seemed like forever, Dare and Jax were brought into the room. The guards were a little more careful with their *fólkhagi* than the land

shifter.

Erik sprinted over to them and embraced Jax who tried to talk around his gag. Erik immediately removing Jax's gag.

"You alright?" Jax asked.

Erik nodded and pressed a chaste kiss to his mate's lips; he didn't care who saw.

Thank you. He told his sibling. Dare had done something no one, not even Erik, had ever thought they would do. Venturing out on their own was a huge thing.

Dare beamed as Erik undid his gag.

Tell them to uncuff you.

But it wasn't necessary. Their father was already demanding that of them.

How long does Jax have before the Song wears off?

It won't. They smiled like they had a secret.

Had Dare found a way to make the Song permanent? For that matter how did Jax get all the way here without dying? All these questions.

As soon as Dare and Jax were free his father called attention back to himself.

"Before I deal with you two," he said pointing at the twins. "Ervin, kneel."

The siren did as he was commanded, kneeling in front of the king's dais.

"Twice you've imprisoned my children without my consent. The first time I let it go because you insisted that it was necessary. However, I can't let it go again. As far as I can tell, Dare was returning to the city. Not only did you lock him away in our jail, but you also cuffed and bound him and his companion, who I'm assuming came in peace.

"*Fólkhagi* Derrick, were you or your friend threatening any of the guard?"

Dare shook their head, "No father, we were coming straight here to—" Dare looked at Erik.

Father already knows. I told him who Jax was to get you released.

"To bring Alpha Heir Jaxon Shadowpaw to his mate."

Both Ervin and Maise looked at the wolf in shock. His mother was smiling.

"Of course, you knew, woman," the king said to his mate. He shook his head, "We'll deal with that in a minute."

He turned back towards Ervin, "Ervin you have been a valued guard to me all these years. However, with recent events, I simply cannot trust you with my family's safety anymore. Please enjoy your retirement. You will continue to receive all the benefits of a member of the guard, but in honor only. You will no longer have access to or hold a position within my court."

“My *Fylkir*,” the siren begged. He really was a suck up. His holier-than-thou attitude from before was completely gone. He begged, trying to say that Jaxon had weapons on him and that he was merely protecting the city.

“Your Highness, if I may,” one of the guards said behind him. He must have been one of the jailers, as Erik didn’t recognize him. Maybe he was new. Oh well.

His father waved at him to continue, “The wolf didn’t have anything on him except for this box. Ervin was hostile from the get-go. To the point that the wolf had to use his Alpha Power to force Ervin to release *Fólkhagi* Derrick.”

“Thank you for speaking up, son. Please escort Ervin out of the castle. His things will be packed up in the next few days and delivered to his private residence. Make sure that all the guards are aware that Ervin is no longer allowed in the castle unless I call for it.”

“Understood, Your Highness,” the guard replied with a nod. He waved at the other guards who picked up the sniveling Ervin and dragged him from the room.

Chapter 19

Was it just him or did Erik look more ethereal now than he had the last time Jax saw his mate? Hrm? All he wanted to do right then was drag Erik off to his room and have crazy underwater monkey sex with him. Was it wrong to want him in his siren form? Was that considered bestiality? Okay maybe he'd been underwater for too long, but Goddess, he wanted his mate.

Thank *Danu* he had loose swim trunks on to hide his very stiff member.

"Erik," Matheis started. His mate sighed in relief next to him. Was the use of his shortened name a sign that he was in dad mode and not king mode? "I have failed you, as a father, but also as the king of our people. For that I am sorry."

Jaxon heard Erik suck in a breath. Jax squeezed his hand in support.

"Erik says it's okay, he understands," Dare said from the other side of his mate.

The king swam down from his throne and pulled Erik into a hug. When he pulled away his eyes were full of tears. Jax wasn't sure how he could tell the king was crying since they were underwater, but he could, nonetheless. The king didn't let go of Erik but held his shoulders so there was space between them.

"No son, it's not okay. I took something from you I can never give back. And I did it because you felt you couldn't tell me the truth, and that's never okay. You should be able to tell me anything. Especially the fact that you found your fated mate.

"As a king, I only thought of the protection of our people and failed to understand the whole situation."

Jaxon agreed with what the king was saying, but his mate was shaking his head.

Knowing his son wanted to say something, Matheis looked at Dare.

"He says that both mother and I knew and told him to tell you, begged him, and he chose not to. It was just as much his fault. He knew that your punishment was coming solely from a king who needed to protect his people and that as a father you hated doing it."

Matheis looked back at the son in his arms. "You are right. I did hate doing it, but there were many other routes I could have taken. Fate has

given you the gift of your true mate. The one person that was meant to be yours. Cherish it always."

"You're letting me go back to the surface?" Dare said relaying Erik's thoughts.

"Yes. You and Dare can return to the surface in your mate's care. Speaking of, I think some introductions are in order. Your mother is dying to meet your mate," Matheis pulled his son in for another hug, kissed his temple and whispered that he was sorry yet again before releasing Erik.

Erik swam back to Jax throwing his arms around him before pressing his lips to Jax's, keeping it brief before turning back towards his parents.

"For the love of all that is holy, you need to learn sign language. I'm not going to be your interpreter for the rest of our lives," Dare grumbled. "Yeah, yeah, yeah," they added to whatever Erik had told them.

"*Faðir, Móðir,* meet Jaxon Shadowpaw, Alpha Heir to the Shadowall Bay Pack and Erik's fated mate," Dare stated with a smile.

Erik beamed.

Matheis held out his hand, "Nice to meet you, son. I am terribly sorry I locked your mate away from you."

Channeling his diplomatic side, Jaxon forced a smile—quietly thanking *Danu* that his Norse had improved greatly. "I understand, sir. As Alpha Heir and High Commander of our guard and navy I recognize the need to make decisions that we don't always want to make."

Yes, he'd made decisions before that weren't necessarily good for a few people but benefited the pack. But he didn't think he'd ever make the same decision that Fylkir Matheis did if he'd been in Matheis' shoes—or rather tail—position.

Once the king released his hand, Jaxon was swooped into motherly arms, a kiss pressed to his cheek. After his mother died, Aunt Amelia did her best to fill the role, but her hugs were never the same. Thelia's hugs reminded him of his mom's.

"You are so handsome; I can't wait to get to know you. Oh, did you bring the eggs? I want to love on them."

"Eggs?" the king asked.

Erik nodded.

"Four of them," Jax said proudly. "But to answer your question, no. They are back home. My cousins, Caspian and Flynn, are watching over them."

"Congratulations, brother," Maiseis said. Jaxon had almost forgotten about the crowned prince. The prince held out his hand.

"Nice to meet you. Erik and Dare have mentioned you a few times."

"Oh, I can't imagine it's any good. They do tend to get on my nerves and I on theirs. But I will warn you, you break my brother's heart, you better run and hide. Got it?"

Erik slapped at his brother who quickly dodged.

They spent a few minutes speaking before the king dismissed them. Jax asked Dare if they could go give the news to Brody, telling them that they could head home. Jax, Erik, and Dare would return the following day.

Chapter 20

Erik dragged Jax to his room. As soon as the door closed, they were kissing. Unlike when they were in human form they didn't need to come up for air, since the oxygen filtered through their gills, so the kiss went on and on and on. Jax finally pulled away. "Bed," he growled.

He went without complaint. He wanted this as much as Jax.

"Hands and knees," Jax demanded. "You know what I mean," he added when Erik raised his brow.

Erik did know what he meant but… his hole wasn't on his backside in this form.

Rán, he wished he could talk. *He'll figure it out soon enough,* he decided.

He positioned himself on his bed, his tail bent where his knees would be if he was in human form. His hands holding himself up.

Jax slapped his ass, "I love the feel of your scales," he whispered as he kissed his way up Erik's back. His hand found Erik's nipple and twisted gently.

Erik gasped silently as pleasure shot through him.

Jaxon's hands roamed his tail, slithering along it gently, making him giggle and squirm.

"That ticklish, baby?"

Erik nodded.

"Mmm, you're sexy as feck like this, *beagán iasc*, bent over and waiting."

So are you.

He watched Jaxon with wide eyes as the man caressed his fluke lovingly. His tail twitched and his back bowed. No one had ever spent time just exploring his body before. Sure, he'd had lovers in the past, but this was different.

Without breaking eye contact, Jax leaned over and pressed a soft kiss to his fluke.

Erik groaned; open mouth kisses and soft caresses continued exploring his tail. Each one pushing Erik closer to the brink and Jax hadn't even touched anywhere close to his dick or hole.

Please.

"Show me that pretty hole of yours," Jaxon whispered in his ear.

Erik rolled over, his uncut cock peeking out between his scales, hard, leaking, and red. Jax licking his lips with hooded eyes caused him to pause. His alpha had lost his swim trunks at some point, his skin translucent from the clear scales that protected it from the water. *Streð mik.*

Taking Jax's hand he guided it to his entrance, located underneath his balls which were already drawn up close.

"Feck, you're gorgeous." With a slip of his finger, Jax was pushing inside his entrance pulling a groan from Erik. The alpha took his mouth in a bruising kiss. Teeth clacked together and tongues dueled. Jax's fingers couldn't get deep because of the webbing between. *More,* he tried to beg. Instead, he used his body to rock up into the finger inside him squirming when the tip grazed his prostate.

One finger became two and then three.

"You're so fecking tight."

Please… Need you…

"I've got you, *beagán iasc*."

Fingers were replaced with the blunt tip of Jaxon's cock. Erik lurched up.

"Patience, baby. I don't want to hurt you. Your opening is smaller in this form, but my dick isn't."

Carefully, and way too slowly, Jax pushed his way inside. Finally, after what felt like forever, the man was balls deep and kissing him with fervor. He thrust against Jaxon, grinding his hard member against Jax's stomach, seeking the friction he was craving.

"Oh Goddess, you feel so good."

Please move.

Jax withdrew slowly before plunging back in just as slow. He kissed and sucked on Erik's neck, ears, and jawline before consuming his mouth. His thrusts grew in strength and speed. Soon they were slamming against each other as Jax pounded him into the seagrass below them.

His dick pulsed between them. A silent scream tore from his lips as Erik shouted his release, spilling his sticky fluid between their bodies.

Jax grunted as Erik's channel clamped down on his cock.

"Feck, baby. I'm coming," he cried seconds before cum filled Erik's entrance.

They both panted, even though it wasn't needed with their gills. Jax collapsed on top of him.

"Give me a minute," the alpha said,

Jaxon maneuvered them so they were lying on the seagrass bed facing one another. Jaxon's legs wrapped around his tail.

I love you, Erik mouthed.

"I love you, too, *beagán iasc.*"

Lazy kisses were exchanged.

They laid there basking in each other's presence, his brain to mushy for coherent thought. As they drifted off to sleep the nagging thought Erik had earlier came back. *How was Jax breathing underwater?* The Song that Dare and he used to grant land people gills only lasted about an hour.

"I'll tell you when we wake up," Jax mumbled right before Erik lost consciousness. If he'd been more awake, he might have realized that Jax answered his random thought, but sleep was too tempting for him to fight.

Chapter 21

Jax watched Erik sleeping. His mate had lost weight and had bags under his eyes. He was sure that Erik hadn't been eating or sleeping right. Could he blame Erik? No, he wasn't eating or sleeping right either.

He brushed a lock of Erik's snow-white hair away from his face, the blue chalk long gone as if it had never been there. Jaxon would buy him a shit-ton of it when they got back, in assorted colors.

"Mmm," Erik groaned nuzzling into Jax's neck. It seemed that the siren could still make noises, but his voice was completely gone. Mathesis said it was permanent and could not be reversed, but Jax wondered if Hagatha could do something. Even if it was just getting his voice back.

Either way Jax didn't care. Erik was his whether he could speak or not.

What are you thinking about?

Jax's eyes bugged out. Erik had mouthed the words, probably still too tired to remember he couldn't speak anymore. However, Jax heard him in his head.

He smiled down at his mate. Instead of answering aloud he tried replying by thought, *I'm thinking about you*.

Erik sat up quickly. *Oh, Rán! You can hear me?* he replied excitedly.

Jax nodded, "Yes, *beagán iasc*, seems that fate gave us everything we needed or wanted. But if she hadn't, I wouldn't care. You are more precious and important than your voice."

Erik beamed, *I love you, sæti.*

"I love you too, always."

Erik's stomach growled.

"Come on, let's go get you fed and then we can come back here and have some more hot sex."

Erik didn't move right away. *How is it you're not needing Dare to Sing to you every hour?*

Oh that. "Well, the night that you lost your Song, I went half mad. My wolf took over and his only thought was to find you. He sprinted to the cove and as soon as we were knee deep in the water I started shifting to my human form. My wolf knew he couldn't doggie paddle all the way here. Although that probably would have been funnier than shite.

"Anyway, turns out I didn't shift to my human form. I shifted into this," he said waving to himself. "I don't have a tail, but I have everything

else that I can tell."

Fate really did give us everything, didn't she? Erik replied rising from the bed.

"Yes. Oh, one more thing. The pups have heartbeats now. One of the eggs is a bit bigger than the rest, and it has two heartbeats."

What?! Erik exclaimed. After getting his heart back in check he added, *I mean yeah, I knew it was possible since, you know, Dare and I. But we're the only twins in the history of the royal family, and for one of us to have twins of our own…* Streð mik! *We're going to have five hatchlings.* His mate melted back onto the bed looking a bit queasy. *Give me a minute.*

Jaxon sat down and pulled his mate into his lap. "Yeah, that's exactly how I felt when I realized there were two heartbeats. But we got this. We've got lots of support to help us."

But they've got their own hatchlings.

He pressed a kiss to Erik's temple. "We'll figure it out. There's nothing we can't do together."

You're right.

After a filling dinner of kelp and fish, they returned to Erik's room and made love for the rest of the night, finally falling asleep around three in the morning.

Chapter 22

Hagatha hadn't been able to heal Erik's vocal cords completely as they were literally fried from the Song performed by his father. She had however, been able to restore enough function that he could whisper. It was more of a rasp, and his throat often hurt if he used it, but it was slightly better than nothing, right?

She did, however, tell him that it was possible with daily treatments that he could regain further use of it. He might not ever get his Song back, but he didn't care. He had his mate, and soon his hatchlings.

Every day he drank this disgusting lime green potion. He really didn't want to know what was in it. Afterward, he ate several sweet pastries, brushed his teeth, and swished around mouthwash and still the taste did not go away.

Their swim back to Shadowall Bay had taken a whole week. After their first diversion to show Jax around the *Titanic,* Dare decided to swim ahead, mostly because they were being sickly sweet. But that was okay because Erik wanted Jax all to himself. They'd detoured all over the place, finding shipwrecks that Erik didn't know about, other little caves like the one he and Dare kept their treasures in. Jax had seen things that no other land shifter had ever seen. Well, at least not in the last thousand years, anyway.

Yes, modern man had diving equipment that allowed them to dive deep in the sea, but even that had its limits.

Even Erik had come across things that he'd never seen before.

By the time they got back, Jax's pockets and the backpack he'd brought with him were brimming with seashells and other cool things they'd found along the ocean floor.

They'd even found a rare first edition copy of *Anne of Green Gables* while they'd been exploring the *Titanic*. The book and several other items in the cabin had been enchanted by a preservation spell. It was obvious the room had belonged to a witch. They'd have to return later to retrieve the rest of the items. Jax was sure Hagatha would love to determine if they were just prized possessions of a long-gone witch or something useful.

After they returned, Jax took Erik on day trips all over Ireland showing the siren all that he missed living under the sea. Some days they would make it family outings but others it was just the two of them. Jax had been

delegating more tasks to his deputies but refused to hand over reports regarding his uncle, which were still slim to none. He and Brody had reached out to all known packs around Europe, and Caleb's mate had been asking around the packs he knew in the states. But nothing was coming through.

The other surprise? Jaxon had hired landscapers to dig out a new double Olympic-sized sea-water pool in one section of the garden. It was complete with a sandy beach entry and a jacuzzi big enough for eight full-sized sirens. So now Erik and Dare could swim whenever they wanted too. While the huge pool was plenty big, nothing beat the ocean, so they still took many trips there.

Erik had created a nest in the shallow beach area for their eggs, which they both curled around nightly. Dare could often be found curled up around their niblings eggs as well.

I love lying out here with you, Erik commented. He and Jax were curled up next to their eggs, stargazing.

Me too.

I can't believe I missed these stars all my life. They're beautiful.

Jax rolled to his side, propping himself up on his elbow. *You're beautiful. I've seen stars all my life but they're atrocious compared to you.*

Erik giggled, *Rán, you're silly.* Erik was a fabulous learner; his English was on point, and he'd even picked up a few Irish phrases.

Jax leaned over and kissed Erik's lips. *I just like to hear you laugh,* he replied. When it was just the two of them, he always tried to speak through their bond.

I love you. Make love to me?

You never have to ask, beagán iasc. Jax pulled Erik on top of him, *why don't you make love to me?*

Erik blushed prettily. *I've, um, never, um.*

Jaxon caressed his face. *Do you want to?*

While Erik was making his decision, Jax sucked bruises into his creamy white skin. He was rewarded with sexy little moans. *I can't think when you do that.*

Mmm, but that's the point, isn't it?

Streð mik, he replied, his eyes rolling into the back of his head.

Since Erik hadn't seem to decide what he wanted yet, Jax took over. *Change forms for me, baby. I want to choke on your cock.*

The smooth scales of Erik's tail slipped away under Jax's fingers revealing his slender legs. The baby fine hairs prickled as Jaxon's fingers brushed against his thigh.

Erik's prick was hard and leaking precum, the bulbous head angry with need.

With a single move Jax had Erik straddling his shoulders. All it would take was a single slip of his tongue to taste Erik's sweet seed. Instead, he continued to tease Erik with his fingers, running them ever so lightly over his legs, never touching his cock or balls.

"Please," Erik begged out loud, he was so lost in his passion that he forgot about the strain on his voice.

Jax teased his tongue against the head, flicking the tip and dipping into Erik's salty slit. He was rewarded with a groan as Erik rocked forward, forcing Jax's tongue along the underside of his cock.

Feck! That's it, baby, his mouth too busy to form words.

He pulled Erik closer, bathing his prick with Jax's saliva. It was messy and uncoordinated, but Jax didn't care. His omega was getting lost in his pleasure. Soon, Erik was fucking his mouth with abandon, hitting the back of Jax's throat. All Jax could do was hold on for the ride.

His own cock was confined in his swim trunks begging for release, his hole twitched in anticipation. He didn't bottom often but he would for Erik.

"Eh… *Rán.*.. Fuck… *Streð mik…*" were chanted over and over, not caring one iota about how sore his damaged vocal cords would be afterwards. "I'm coming," Erik screamed hoarsely.

Jax gripped Erik's ass and pulled him in. Seed shot down his throat choking him. Before he knew it, his shorts were sticky with his own release.

He continued to lap at Erik's cock until it softened completely. His omega literally fell onto the sand next to him.

"Ugh, now I'm going to have sand everywhere," Jax groaned. At least he still had his shorts on, right? Even if they were sticky.

Erik's giggled crossed their bond, "*I think we both are*."

Chapter 23

It was finally time. The eggs were going to hatch any day. Usually, a clutch of eggs would hatch within hours or days of each other. There were a few instances recorded where there were weeks between clutchmates. That, however, was unusual.

Flynn had been teaching Erik everything there was to know about fashion and design. Erik loved all the clothes that Flynn had made him and his sibling, but he preferred interior design. Once the hatchlings were a little older, he was going to go to school for it. Jaxon said he could go now, and they'd hire a nanny, but Erik thought that was ridiculous. What's a few years out of a thousand? His babies were only going to be children once.

But just because he wasn't going to go to school yet, that didn't mean he couldn't teach himself some stuff, or scour Pinterest and the Internet, and watch a crap ton of HGTV and the DYI channel to get ideas. And boy, did he have ideas.

By the time the hatchings were due, the nursery was painted canary-yellow with a mural of mermaids and wolves on one wall. Turned out, Dare loved painting. Who would have known? So, there on one wall was the sea filled with mermaids, dolphins, and other sea life that flowed smoothly into a beach and then trees. Wolves and foxes frolicked the tree line, running out into the water, getting their paws wet.

Shelves were loaded with books, diapers, wipes, and other baby things. The closet was filled with little baby clothes that Flynn and Caleb's kids outgrew along with new clothes for the hatchlings. Stuffies were everywhere too.

Jaxon and Erik were basically living in the pool now. At least one of them was with the eggs at all times.

A crack pulled Erik from his thoughts. "It's time," he whispered in amazement as the egg with two heartbeats cracked a little further.

His throat didn't hurt anymore when he spoke, but he still couldn't speak as often or as loud as he had before. Between Hagatha's healing potions and Dare's Songs, he was regaining his voice. Maybe one day he'd even be able to sing again, even if he couldn't Sing.

"Oh shit, it's time," he said aloud to himself again. His brain finally kicked in. He pulled out his phone and sent a group text—those were awesome.

Erik: It's time ::baby emoji, heart emoji, another baby one, three hearts, happy face, baby emoji::

He loved emojis. They were so cool. Jax had started buying him the little stuffies of them. They were ridiculous, but he had a fricking poop emoji stuffy. Who wouldn't want that?

Jax: OMW
Flynn: ::heart emoji:: we're on r way 2 ::winky face::
Mom: I have no idea what in the world they're saying, dear. But we're on our way.

Hers was in runes. Jaxon had found a keyboard app that had the proper keystrokes available. Modern technology was a wonderful thing. Combine that with a little magic, and one could have anything they wanted.

His mother was literally a phone call away and he could text her anytime.

Both his mother and father arrived two weeks ago and weren't leaving until they held their grandbabies. His relationship with his father had gotten better over the past few months but it was still strained. Whose wouldn't be after what he did?

Jax arrive first. Eggs hatching were similar to a live birth. Sometimes it took hours, and sometimes it took minutes. "The twins?" Jax asked even though he could see it himself.

Erik nodded running his webbed fingers over the shell, his fluke swished around lazily, belying his anxiety. "Come on. You can do it, sweethearts."

As they waited, their family appeared around them. Dare latched onto their twin when they arrived.

Another break, and another, until a piece broke off. A little head popped out, they waited as the egg cracked further until it finally broke apart. Two little humans kicked around frantically. Erik and Jax grabbed one each, almost instantly.

"Aren't they supposed to be born in their mer form?" Jax asked cradling the hatchling he picked up. Twin omegas with their *faðir's* snow-white hair.

"It's been a long time since we've had an interspecies hatchling, but not all are born with a siren form, young Jaxon," the king said. "It seems your girls are wolves."

A thought occurred to Erik that he'd never imagined before then. "*Faðir*, how is it we don't have any other interspecies mates?"

Matheis' face fell. "By the time we went into hiding, son, most sirens that had mated outside our species were already gone. Children that didn't have a mer form were forced to split from their parents, orphaned. Mates broke their bonds, wanting their siren mate to be safe."

"Oh, *Rán*," Dare cried out pained for their ancestors.

"But Jax gained a partial mer form?" Erik argued.

"I've never met another who was able to do that, son. It's true, fated mates are given special gifts by fate herself, however, a water form has never been one of them. As far as I can tell, the gifts given are based on the needs of the couple.

"As in Alpha Brody's case, Flynn was able to help him find his brother and later connect with Caleb. Caspian became an empath to save his babe in his time of need. Jaxon gained water breathing abilities and telepathy to be with you."

"Huh," Brody said. "I never thought about that, but Caleb only gained the ability to speak with his wolf." Generally, shifters only got feelings from their wolf counterparts. Caleb actually had the ability to speak to his.

The king turned towards Brody, "I'm not sure of that. Perhaps, he will need it later," he replied with a shrug.

OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS, ALL THEIR HATCHLINGS MADE THEIR APPEARANCE. THEY NAMED THE TWINS McKinley and Kassidy. Erik did not want them to have silly rhythming names like he and Dare did, or even worse, names that meant the same thing, again like he and Dare did. Thank *Rán* his mother hadn't included Maise in the name scheme. That would have been weird.

The rest of the hatchlings had turned out to be sirens, with the twins being the only wolves. Kennedy, the second to hatch, was also an omega girl. Unlike her older sisters, she had Jax's strawberry hair. However, all three of them had Erik's sea-green eyes.

Then there were the boys, the youngest. Finnigan and Kelley, the former an alpha, the latter a beta. Both had Erik's snow-white hair and Jax's blue eyes.

They kept everything neutral in case any of the took after *Föðurkyn* Dare.

Each one of them were already showing their little personalities. It was the cutest thing in the world. When his father deemed it time to return to the sea, Thelia said she was going to stay a while. Erik welcomed his mother's help.

The woman fawned over all of the babies including Brody's and Caspian's children. His mother said it would be a few days still before the three sirens would gain the ability to transform into their human skin. For now, Erik nested with them in the pool while Jax curled around the twins in wolf form to keep them warm at night. The whole family slept under the stars.

Epilogue

The man paced the room he was in. It wasn't more than a small, dilapidated bedroom. The windows were boarded over with plywood.

The carpet was stained from years of use and water damage from a roof leak. Old wallpaper bubbled or hung loosely in spots. The bed smelled of mothballs and filled the air with the same stink.

Chained to the bed was another man. He smelled of wolf and looked familiar, but he couldn't place why. The wolf had to have been there for a while. His eyes were sunken in, and his lips cracked. His ribcage pushed against his skin, trying to break free, and his blonde hair was dirty, stringy, and matted.

But he ignored it all, waiting for the woman who'd promised him everything.

The door cracked open. Another wolf stuck his head inside, his nose scrunched in disgust. "The witch will see you now."

He huffed; he'd been in this room for hours. When he first arrived and demanded to see the witch, he assumed they were taking him to see her right away. Instead, they'd stuck him in here for fucking hours.

He was led through the house, which was in no better shape than the room he'd been placed in.

"You failed," a cold voice sneered.

"Yeah well, you promised me the king's ear, said that the spell was impenetrable. That there was no way he could break free. The man gave that brat a choice he wasn't supposed to give," he yelled. "For a thousand years I bided my time, waiting for the perfect opportunity and—"

"Silence!"

The spell washed over him, and his mouth clamped shut, he couldn't speak if he wanted too. *Fucking witch.*

"It's not my fault you couldn't seduce one of the princex. But now I have a better plan," Celestina cackled. "You'll have one more chance to bring one of them to me. They are going back to land, yes?"

Ervin nodded since he couldn't speak.

"Good, good."

Thank You

Thank you so much for reading Erik and Jaxon's story. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did writing it. Dare is getting his story next in *Snow White*, turn the page for your own sneak peek.

Please don't forget to leave a review, even a few words helps us indie authors out.

A big thank you to my editor, Sionna Trenz with Star River Author Services, instagram.com/star_river_author_services/. If you haven't checked out Sionna's Stargazer series, it's amazing. You can visit her author site, https://SionnaTrenz.com.

Want to know more about Brody and Flynn, or Caspian and Sean? Check out their books—both available now—*Ginger Fella* and *Caspian Untangled*—KaydeeRobins.com.

Stay in Contact

Subscribe to my Newsletter

Bonus Scenes, ARC Reviews, WIPs, What I'm Reading, Promos, and more…
http://www.KaydeeRobins.com/SubscribeNow

Join Robin’s Nest

Access to early content, teasers, and more…
https://facebook.com/groups/KDRobinsNest

Follow Me

Facebook
Instagram
Pinterest
Twitter
GoodReads
BookBub

Contact Me

Kaydee@KaydeeRobins.com

Visit my Website

http://KaydeeRobins.com

Books by Kaydee Robins

Find all my books on my website.

Eclipsed

A Contemporary Military Romance

Love Found – Prequel – *Box Set Only*
Classified Lovers
Love Hacked
Most Wanted Love – Bonus Novella
Lovers Recovered
Secured Lover
Box Set – Coming 2023

The New Alphas Series

MPreg – A Contemporary Post-Apocalyptic Romance

Omega of the Enemy
Omega on the Run
Beta in Deep

Legends of the Packs

MPreg – A Contemporary Fairy Tale Shifter Romance

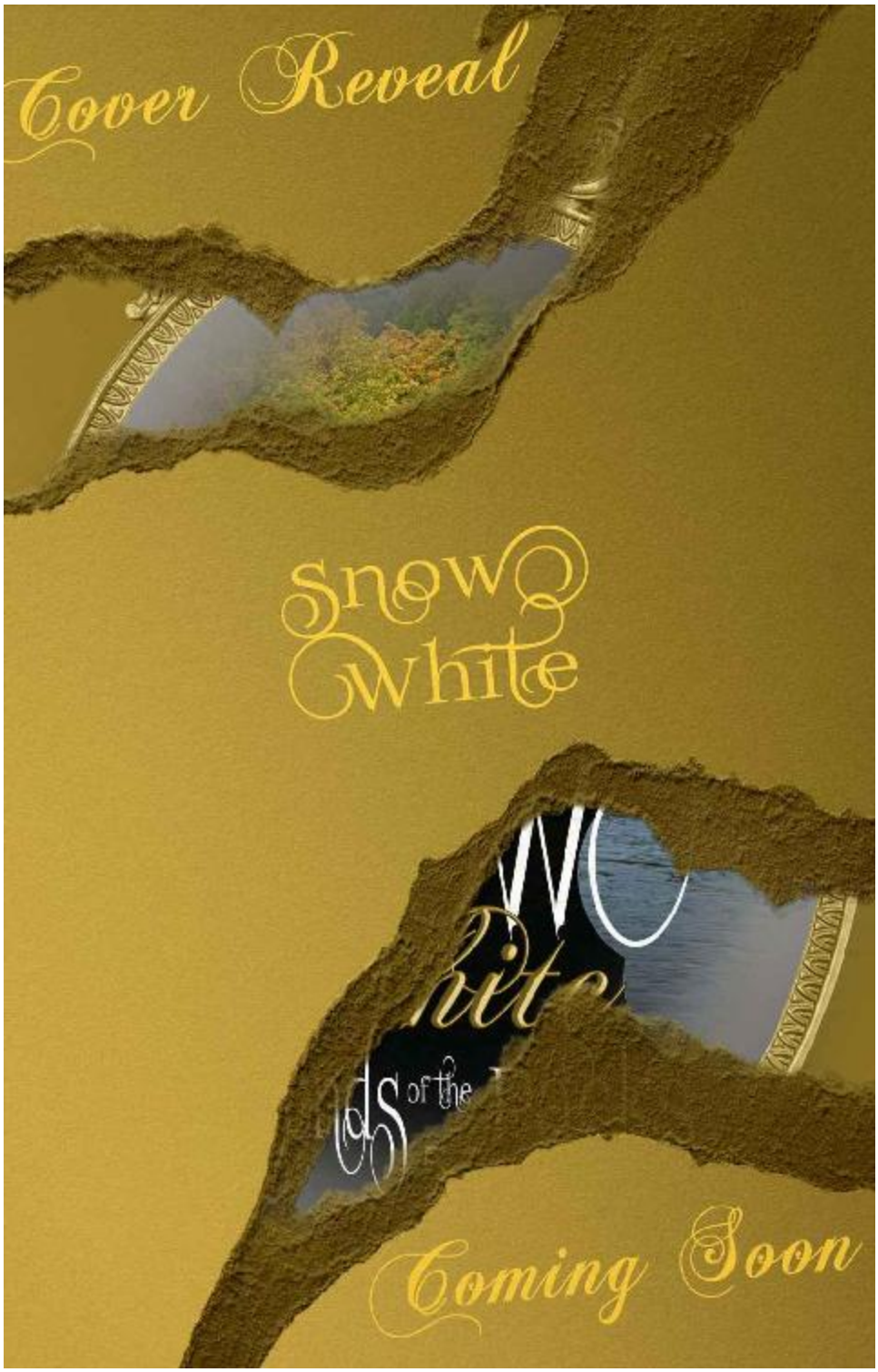
Ginger Fella
Kelsey's Lamp – Bonus Novella
Caspian Untangled
Beau and the Bear
The Siren's Song
Snow White - Aug 2022

Wayward Warriors

MPreg – A Contemporary MC Shifter Romance

Pyro

Sneak Peek



Snow White

Light gray cirrus clouds dotted the sky above Dublin, Ireland. The specks of farmland turned into the outskirts of the city. They approached Dublin airport from the west, flying right over the sports complexes and the golf course. With his shifter vision he could see little pin prick sized humans going about their day playing the games of their choice.

The female flight attendant droned on about landing procedures. This one was just a bit peppier than the last, but honestly? It was just another day in an extensive list of days that filled the void in Ângelo Mandriice's life. Ever since his parents' death he'd been plane hopping from city to city chasing something. What? He had no clue.

"…welcome to Dublin," she finished before hanging up the eighties style telephone on its receiver. Ângelo already had his ever-present laptop stored away and his seat back in the upright position. He was ready to get off this tin can. It'd been a long flight from the Americas. His six-one frame had started protesting the confined space only hours into the flight.

The plane landed without incident and forty minutes later he was standing in the car rental line with his old ratty luggage in tow. Sure, he could afford new and should probably get it since he traveled a lot for his work, but all he needed was his computer. Technically, he didn't *need* to travel for work. He could do everything remotely. He found that visiting the businesses and interacting with the customers improved his creativity and ultimately his design ideas.

After renting a Fiat he was on his way. He still had a three-hour drive before he arrived in the small village of Ballallog where his most recent clients were located. Honestly, why a small-town bar and doctors office needed his skills as a graphic and web designer he didn't know, but he wasn't going to complain. Getting out of a big city would do wonders for his soul. Maybe he'd stay a while.

He connected his phone to the Bluetooth and set his favorite rock mix. Legião Urbana's *Eduardo e Mônica* immediately blasted from the speakers. Adjusting the volume Ângelo pulled out into the airport traffic. This wasn't the first time he'd been to Ireland, but it was the first time he'd be spending more than a few days there.

He stopped at a little hole in the wall joint, for an early dinner. A cute twink sat him down in a two-person booth. Ângelo ordered a water, stuffed

Yorkshire pudding, and Guinness stew. It was his go to dish when he was in Ireland. He loved the hearty flavoring. It was much different than the Spanish style cuisine he grew up on in Brazil.

The waiter flirted with him whenever he came over to check on him. If he wasn't due to meet with a client in the morning, he might have taken the man up on his not-so-subtle offer.

True to his nature he ate slowly and methodically. Even though he'd taken a nap on the plane the food made him sleepy. Maybe he'd nap in the car before he drove for almost three hours. *Jaci* knew he'd fall asleep being in the car for too long.

Once he finished, he returned to his car. The nap was definitely of the uncomfortable variety and only lasted about an hour. But it did the trick, nonetheless.

Restarting his Spotify mix he started the trek across the Irish countryside. The music shuffled through his rock collection. He had a little bit of everything really, Queen, Korn, Papa Roach, a few more of his Brazilian favorites and even a few not so well-known bands. His parents had disliked his taste in music but as an only child indulged him anyway.

It was a Goddess send really. Without rock he'd probably have fallen asleep at least a half a dozen times over the years behind the wheel and that wouldn't be good at all. He sometimes hated his sloth. Why couldn't he have a cool animal counterpart like a wolf or fox?

Cirrus clouds slowly morphed into stratocumulus ones the farther he drove. He'd planned on stopping in Shadowall Bay—the largest wolf pack in the area—however, the sky had already opened up and he decided he could return to the city a few days later when the weather was better.

It was still raining cats and dogs by the time he reached The Red Fox, a small, ancient pub in Ballallog. The little village looked like it came right out of a story book, surrounded by trees. Most of the homes were nestled in said trees. Vines and other foliage covered the cottages, making it feel like the forest was devouring the town slowly but surely.

The dirt road was barely wide enough for his small car and was bumpy with misuse. Besides the pub there was a small grocery store, a doctor's office that had a temporary sign, a pharmacy, hardware store, and dinner. He could literally walk the length of the town in five minutes. There had to be other houses somewhere. They were a good thirty minutes away from both Shadowall Bay and Redwood Den—a fox den in the area—so Ballallog probably wouldn't get any foot traffic from either city.

He parked his car in the only parking area available, which happened to be right next to the pub. Surprisingly there were about ten cars parked in the dirt lot besides his.

With his jacket pulled up over his semi-long, black, swoopy hair he made a mad dash for the pub's door. Soaked to the bone he was greeted by a

jingle, a crackling fire, and smells typical of what one might encounter in an old-fashioned pub, stale ale, greasy foods, and a whiff of cigarette smoke.

A sole lumberjack, with wrinkly skin and silver hair sat at the bar sipping on his ale. The owner, Sebastian, had told him that they had a room available for him to stay in while he was there, so he made his way over to the bar, sitting on a rickety stool that had seen better days.

The bar itself was clean and well cared for.

“I’ll be,” sneeze, “right with,” sneeze, “you.” A very Irish accented voice called out from the back. He heard a few more sneezes and a curse before a teeny man with the brightest red hair he’d ever seen emerged from the kitchen carrying a keg that was almost the same size as him.

Ângelo itched to help the sexy man with the most likely full keg but he forced himself to remain seated. After a few more sneezes into his shoulder and a huff the redhead sat the barrel down and turn towards him.

“Hi. You must be Ângelo,” he said.

“Yep, that’s me,” he replied with a smile.

“I’m,” sneeze, “Sebastian.” When Ângelo looked at him in concern, his smile got wider. “Don’t worry, I’m not sick, I just have the worst allergies ever. Anyway, welcome to The Red Fox, can I get you anything to drink?”

Ângelo nodded, “A water would be good.”

“Coming right up.”

Sebastian returned to the back, another sneeze followed by a nose blowing and water running could be heard before he returned to the front and grabbed a glass from under the bar. A few seconds later a glass of the icy cool beverage was placed in front of him.

“Go sit in front of the fire to dry off. When the rain stops, I’ll help you get your things.”

Ângelo nodded and did as the fox said.

About the Author

Reading has always been a passion of mine. In middle and high school, I would participate in the summer reading programs at the local library, often winning many prizes. My mom called me a hermit because I'd rather be in my room reading a book than outside or with my friends. I discovered my love for books in high school also extended to plays; thus, my passion for theatre was born. My favorite was working behind the scenes, creating colorful lighting effects.

I followed my passion in college and obtained an associate's in theatre arts. I also wrote short stories and fan fiction (don't judge). While I loved the theatre, I quickly learned that it wasn't practical to do for a living unless I got a break. So, I studied web and graphic design and did theatre as a hobby. Four years later, I had a bachelor's in information technology, followed by a master's a couple of years later. Today, I work as a system administrator in a NOC (network operations center), where I monitor my companies' network for server issues. Since a NOC is 24x7, I work in 12-hour shifts, giving me literally half the month off to work on my hobbies.

In 2019, I decided I would write again. My kids were finally old enough I could concentrate more on my hobbies than theirs. I published my first book, A Spy and his SEAL, at the end of August. I design the covers for my books.

I learned long ago. I enjoy reading all kinds of romances, straight, gay, bisexual; it doesn't matter. My favorite being gay paranormal. Nothing beats a delightful book about fated mates, shifters, and male pregnancy. Another top pick of mine is action/suspense romance. What's better than falling in love while dodging bullets and saving lives?

As for my personal life, I am a cisgender straight woman. I am married to a wonderful man who supports me for my weird habits and interests. He

is a stay-at-home dad taking care of our three sons. When I’m not working, I’m reading, writing, playing video games, or watching my favorite dramas.